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Observe American Education Week, November 10 through 16

DRAMATICS

The Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XVIII, No. 1

OCTOBER, 1946

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Troupe 585). Directed by June
Lingo.



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from "DRAMATIC"

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Say you saw it in *Dramatics Magazine*.

NOTES AND by the EDITOR FOOTNOTES

THERE is always something exhilarating about the opening of a new school year. Perhaps this is occasioned by the fact that we all, as students and as teachers, feel that the new year will bring events and opportunities such as we have not had before. Perhaps it is due to the fact that our supply of energy has been replenished over the summer months, that our enthusiasm is high, that we are now determined to accomplish so much more than we did last year or the year before. Whatever the cause, it is to our advantage that we all share in this feeling of expectancy as the curtain rises on the 1946-47 season. Energy, enthusiasm, determination—these are the major factors which will largely determine whatever measure of success will be ours during the coming months.

What should be the major educational objective for this season's dramatic arts program? The answer to this question will be determined by local needs and conditions, and we have no doubt but that most groups will set up goals worthy of their efforts and time. Above everything else, however, we feel that the primary objective for every educational theatre group in the land should be that of instilling more humanity into hearts and minds of the people about us. Why? Because a quarter of a century of wars and bloodshed has taken from the greater part of the world the simplicity, kindness, goodwill, understanding, and tolerance essential to happiness and well-being. If, through our plays, pageants, and programs in the school and the community, we succeed in softening the hearts of people about us, we will have gone far in the realization of a worthy objective for the season's work.

With this issue of DRAMATICS we begin the publication of three series of articles designed to stimulate and enrich classroom and club activities in dramatics. The article on Sir Henry Irving, by Paul Myers, is the first of a series of seven papers on great actors and actresses of other lands. These are addressed primarily to dramatics students, but their appeal to directors and teachers has in no way been minimized. The series of articles on the one-act play, introduced by Professor Hunter's article on page 6, is addressed mainly to directors. The series of articles on designing scenery, by Professor A. S. Gillette, is addressed to both teachers and students. We offer these articles with the hope that they will serve as the basis for many reports and discussions.

The summer was highlighted by the stimulating convention held by the Children's Theatre Committee of The American Educational Theatre Association at Seattle, Washington, on August 2-5. A

report appears in Miss Horton's Department, page 18.

Two fall projects sponsored by The National Thespian Society merit the attention of high school dramatics groups everywhere. The first of these is a series of one-day drama clinics for secondary schools sponsored by the Society and cooperating institutions. See the article on page 3. While the number of cooperating institutions is not as large as we should like to see it, the start for this project, which we hope will become an annual affair, is impressive. Perhaps the number of cooperating institutions will be doubled a year from now. If you are within travel distance of one of these clinics, we urge you to make attendance of your dramatics group a major assignment of this fall.

The other project concerns an experiment in taking classic drama to high schools, sponsored by the Society and the Department of Drama of Kent State University. While the high schools benefiting from this project are limited to northeastern Ohio, the results will be of interest to secondary schools everywhere. If the experiment is successful, The National Thespian Society will gladly cooperate with other educational institutions interested in sponsoring tours of outstanding plays among high schools. An article regarding this project will appear in our November issue.

Another major project of The National Thespian Society for the current season is the Second National Drama Conference which will be held at Indiana University, in June, with the cooperation of the Indiana University Theatre. Full particulars will be announced in our December issue.

The Second National Convention of the Children's Theatre Committee of The American Educational Theatre Association will also be held at Indiana University in June. Further particulars will be published in subsequent issues of this magazine.

The annual conventions of the Speech Association of America and The American Educational Theatre Association will be held at the Sherman Hotel, Chicago, on December 30, 31, and January 1. These conventions are always highlights of the winter months for teachers and students of speech and dramatic arts. More details will appear in our December issue.

The firms whose advertisements appear in this magazine provide funds required for printing this publication. By purchasing their products you as a subscriber are not only assured first-class service and materials, but you also give assistance towards the continued publication of this magazine. When you write our advertisers, please say that you saw their advertisements in these pages.

"Education for the Atomic Age" is the theme for American Education Week which will be observed November 10 through 16.

In order to conserve space for other materials scheduled for publication, this page will appear in every other issue during the coming months.

Laughs!
Laughs!
Laughs!

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IN

"DOCTOR'S ORDERS"

A New HIT Comedy

in Three Acts

By

KURTZ GORDON

THROW away your cook book! If you are looking for a recipe for laughs, here is a recipe to end all recipes. Get out your big mixing bowl and follow through with this one. First: Take one Letty Madden, spinster and major stockholder of the Madden Department Store, add Agatha, her prim and oh-so-proper sister who thinks that Adolf, their cousin and manager of the store can do no wrong; add a generous portion of Rita Norris, his secretary, who is accused of stealing \$5000, throw in a dynamic pinch of Steve Harmann, a good-looking young lawyer, who represents Rita in the theft charge, dissolve these last two ingredients with Julia Madden, Adolf's daughter, a sweet, young, ten karat honeys; season well with Miss Arnold, Miss Powell and Miss Kent, minor stockholders, who insist upon making their own hats. WHAT HATS! And when no one is looking, spice it up with a heaping spoonful of Maimie, the cook and housekeeper. Mix well and what have you got? Inhibitions! Letty has jumbled dreams that trouble her all because she is positive that Rita is innocent. She consults Dr. Jordan, the new psychiatrist, who diagnoses her case and tells her the only way to be a healthy, normal woman is to yield to her every impulse regardless of the consequences. And does she? You bet! She runs the gamut from roller skating to shoplifting in her own store. With Steve's help she exposes Adolf as the real thief and handles him in her own uninhibited fashion that will leave unquestioned the high voltage of this laugh provoking comedy. Her mad antics are a riot and at the peak of it all, Letty gets her man. It's the last word in laughs for any audience.

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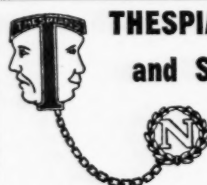
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DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

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DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

Drama Clinics for High Schools

Sponsored by National Thespian Society and Cooperating Institutions

OVER sixteen hundred college and university drama departments throughout the United States have been invited by The National Thespian Society to act as cooperating institutions in sponsoring a nation-wide series of one-day drama clinics during the 1946-47 season for the purpose of improving the quality of dramatic productions among secondary schools.

Carrying endorsements by a number of national leaders in the field of speech and dramatics, the invitation states that "constant change in teaching personnel, lack of local leadership, absence of stage facilities, and lack of information of what constitutes an adequate dramatic arts program for the boys and girls of our schools" presented problems in the field of secondary school dramatics which can be solved only by a carefully planned program of assistance and genuine cooperation from colleges, universities, and other advance speech and theatre organizations.

Plans for sponsoring the one-day series of clinics are as follows:

Sponsors: The National Thespian Society and cooperating institutions. The Society will be responsible for coordinating the nation-wide effort.

Purpose: To improve the quality of dramatic productions among secondary schools.

Date for Clinic: A Saturday during September through December 15, 1946. (The time for holding clinics has now been extended to May 1, 1947.) Each cooperating institution acting as a local sponsor is free to choose a convenient date.

Hours for Clinic: From 9:00 a. m. to 4:00 p. m. An evening session may be included if a dramatic performance is presented for the benefit of participating groups.

Area Served by Clinic: Each cooperating institution is free to determine the number of schools which shall be invited to attend the clinic. In general, schools invited to attend should be within a fifty-mile radius from the campus or building where the clinic is held.

Program: The program for the one-day clinic should consist of worthwhile activities and events designed to meet the needs of participating high school drama groups. Programs may include talks, conferences, demonstrations, group discussions, lectures, question and answer periods, and exhibits. Appropriate subjects include play selection, casting, directing, rehearsal techniques, lighting, scenery construction, painting, costuming, make-up, acting, pantomime, setting the stage, voice, diction, use of P. A. systems in presenting dramatic programs, radio broadcasting, radio appreciation, motion picture appreciation, and playwriting.

Local Arrangements: Each cooperating institution will assume complete responsibility for planning a worthwhile program under the direction of a competent staff. A staff member should act as leader or chairman for the day's program, and should appoint those who will assist him in planning and presenting the program. Each institution may charge an individual or group admission fee to defray expenses.

The names of those institutions which already have made definite arrangements for sponsoring one-day drama clinics are listed on this page. The names of other institutions which may undertake the sponsorship of clinics later in the season will

Attention, Directors

A NUMBER of institutions interested in sponsoring drama clinics were unable to set a date in time to meet the deadline for this issue, and are not, therefore, listed as cooperating institutions on this page. We suggest that, if the college or university nearest your school is not listed on this page, you communicate immediately with the director of the drama department to ascertain if plans are being made for a one-day clinic during the 1946-47 season.

If you are informed that no plans are being made, we suggest that you bring to the attention of the director of drama the need for sponsoring a one-day clinic for the advancement of dramatic arts among the secondary schools of your district, and urge him to sponsor a one-day drama clinic during the season. A folder containing suggestions for a one-day program may be obtained upon request from The National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio.

be announced in subsequent issues of this magazine. High school dramatic arts directors interested in attending one or more of these clinics should communicate directly with the nearest institution or institutions where clinics are scheduled, and not with The National Thespian Society.

The series of one-day drama clinics for high schools is enthusiastically endorsed by a number of educational leaders. Dr. W.

Norwood Brigrance, President of the Speech Association of America, writes as follows:

"The theatre, more perhaps than any other single man-devised institution, has mirrored the pattern of human life, revealed to man his foibles, and challenged his neglect of ideals. The study of drama is the study of man, and it ought to be stimulated in American educational institutions. I am happy, therefore, to endorse the nation-wide drama clinics as means of improving the quality of drama productions in the secondary schools."

Rosamond Gilder, editor of Theatre Arts, expressed her approval in these words:

"Every effort to raise the standards and broaden the interests of high schools in the drama is most worthwhile. The project for high school drama clinics sounds excellent and we wish you the greatest success."

Executive Secretary John W. Hulburt of the American Educational Theatre Association writes:

"The nation-wide drama clinics afford an excellent opportunity for cooperation between educational theatres of various levels. The AETA strongly urges support of this project."

Other leaders who endorse the series of one-day clinics include: E. Turner Stump, Grand Director of Alpha Psi Omega Dramatic Fraternity, Monroe Lippman, President of the National Collegiate Players, Lee Norville, President of Theta Alpha Phi Dramatic Fraternity, Reverend James J. Donohue, Chairman of The National Catholic Theatre Conference, Mildred Streeter, President of Zeta Phi Eta Fraternity, and Lotta Carril, President of Phi Beta Fraternity.

Cooperating Institutions

		Director
Alabama College, Montevallo, Ala.	Jan. 30-Feb. 1	W. H. Trumbauer
Montana State University, Missoula, Mont.	Oct. 19	Ronald-Bel Stiffler
St. Mary of the Woods College, Indiana	Dec. 14	Sister Mary Olive
The Playhouse, Box 338, Big Rapids, Mich.	Nov. 9	Russel J. Reed
University of New Hampshire, Durham, N. H.	Nov. 23	J. Donald Batcheller
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Ark.	Oct. 19	V. L. Baker
Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.	Nov. 16	Donald L. Barbe
Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa.	Oct. 26	John W. Hulburt
Polytechnic Institute, Ruston, La.		Vera Alice Paul
State Teachers College, Moorhead, Minn.		Byron D. Murray
University of Denver, Denver, Colo.	Oct. 19	Campton Bell
Little Theatre, Shreveport, La.	Oct. 19	John Wray Young
Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.	Dec. 7	Donald H. Horton
San Bernardino College, San Bernardino, Calif.	Nov. 16 or 23	Tempe E. Allison
Weber College, Ogden, Utah	Oct. 5	M. Thatcher Allred
Nazareth College, Louisville, Ky.	Nov. 9	Sister Mary Ransom
State Teachers College, Eau Claire, Wis.	Oct. 19	Earl S. Kjer
University of Miami, Miami, Fla.	Dec. 7	Fred Koch, Jr.
Denison University, Granville, Ohio	Dec. 7	Edward A. Wright
State College, Chico, Calif.	Nov. 23	Harlen M. Adams
State Teachers College, Cortland, N. Y.	May 24 (1946)	Mary Noble Smith
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah	Oct. 26	T. Earl Pardoe
University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.		Edward C. Crouse
State College, Murfreesboro, Tenn.	Oct. 19	Edward L. Tarpley
College of Arts and Industries, Kingsville, Tex.	Dec. 7	Lewis W. Miller
Junior College, Modesto, Calif.	Nov. 23	L. I. Bartlett
University of Delaware, Newark, Dela.	Nov. 25	C. R. Kase
The Ohio State University	Dec. 7	John H. McDowell
University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.	Dec. 14	Donovan Rhynsbarger
University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.	Oct. 26	E. J. West
Quincy College, Quincy, Ill.	Dec. 7	Father Bert Dahm
Yale University, New Haven	(Tentative)	
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.	Oct. 19	Mary Thurman Pyle
State College, Natchitoches, La.		Robert B. Capel
College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn.	Nov. 2	John Lee Doll
College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minn.		Mabel M. Frey
Immaculate College, Immaculata, Pa.	Nov. 9	Sister Mary Donatus
McMurry College, Abilene, Texas	Dec. 7	Harold W. Fees
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio	Nov. 9	E. Turner Stump
Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 9	Barnard Hewitt
Radford College, Radford, Va.	Oct. 26	Dr. Long
State Teachers College, Farmville, Va.	Oct. 12	

Sir Henry Irving

The First of a Series of Seven Articles on Great Actors and Actresses from Other Lands

By PAUL MYERS

Theatre Collection, Public Library, New York City

THOUGH Sir Henry Irving has been dead less than fifty years, it is almost impossible to gain a fair or accurate estimate of his abilities as an actor. Too many of the contemporary criticisms and opinions are colored with personal feelings. They have been written by either close friends or bitter enemies, and the feelings of the writer have swayed altogether the critical dicta. As a producer and theatre manager, however, almost all agree that he ranks among the greatest the theatre has known. His tenure of London's Lyceum Theatre, from 1878 until his death in 1905, is one of the brightest spots at a time when the English theatre was literally aglitter with brilliant theatrical events. Here, abetted by the lovely Ellen Terry and a company that, at one time or another, included almost every actor who gained prominence in the English theatre during the next three decades, Sir Henry Irving held undoubted eminence.

This illustrious gentleman was born George Henry Brodribb in 1838. His father was the janitor of a firm of London stockbrokers; his mother was employed as a cleaning woman. Little is known of his schooling or the early training that developed in George Henry Brodribb the artistry and taste that was to distinguish Sir Henry Irving. At an early age, however, he obtained an introduction to Samuel Phelps, who was the manager of the theatre at Sadler's Wells. By so doing, Irving put himself in the succession of the "great traditions" of the English theatre, which has since all but disappeared. Since Shakespeare's time, not by direct or lineal or regulated descent but by consent and prestige, the leadership of the theatre passed from one actor to another. In most instances the successor to the title would have worked as an apprentice or minor actor under his predecessor. This, Irving did as a pupil of Phelps and, in his turn, assumed the leadership. Many of Irving's young actors achieved a like prominence (of some of whom we shall hear later), but the main line of progression has become dimmed since no actor at present continues a similar activity of theatre management.

The plays of Henry Irving's repertory have, today, all but vanished from the stage. Now and then, one is given a performance much like some ancient piece of art is placed on exhibition in a museum as a reminder of a dead or outworn culture. These plays strike us as overly melodramatic, artificial, and void of import or significance. That is because we have come to accept as standards of good drama those very plays which Irving re-

IT seems necessary, somehow, to attach a brief foreword to this, the first of a series of seven articles on as many actors and actresses. The individuals themselves need no introduction to any lover of the theatre, for they are all extremely well known and rank among the greatest artists in the history of the theatre. A foreword is indicated, however, as a means of giving the articles correlation and significance as an entity, rather than just a series of isolated essays.

There is very little similarity among the artists. Each had his or her own particular style and each excelled in roles which were outside of the others' repertoires. The single thread which binds them all is that each was an artist from another nation who gained equally great fame in the United States. With the single exception of Mei Lan-fang, the Chinese actor and dancer, all of these artists have died since the turn of the twentieth century. The one known best to the greatest number of us is Mme. Alla Nazimova, since her death has been very recent and her last years were spent largely touring about the country in the plays of Ibsen or before the film cameras of Hollywood.

Each of these actors or actresses, however, has brought great glory to the American theatre. Sir Henry Irving from England, Mei Lan-fang from China, Nazimova from Russia, Coquelin and Bernhardt from France, Modjeska from Poland, and Duse and Salvini from Italy, have brought from their artistic heritage something of greatness to the American cultural scene. Surely greater proof could not be offered of the universality of art.—Paul Myers.

jected. Ibsen, Hauptmann, and Shaw seemed to Irving sordid and mere tragedy unrelieved by any beauty of action or speech. Shaw himself, in his preface to the published collection of his correspondence with Ellen Terry (for many years, Irving's leading lady) writes of the situation in these words: "Irving fascinated London in a play called *The Bells* under an old-fashioned management. His success was so great and so entirely personal that he was able to lift the theatre out of the hands of his manager and take its professional destiny into his own hands with all the shackles cast off from his art, in the position as head of the English stage which he held almost unchallenged for thirty years. The earliest notable use he made of his freedom was to engage Ellen Terry as his leading lady. It was his first and last enlightened stroke of policy. For he immediately turned back to the old Barry Sullivan repertory of mutilated Shakespeare and Bulwer-Lytton, to which he actually added *The Iron Chest* of the obsolete Colman. "This rebuke," it must be understood, though it came from one of the greatest English playwrights and critics; came also from one who suffered rejection under Irving's policy.

WE ARE, however, skipping far ahead of the story. In May, 1870, Irving

appeared at London's Vaudeville Theatre in the role of Digby Grant in Albery's *The Two Roses*. For the first time, the public accepted him as an actor of great talent. Five and six year runs of a single play were at that time unknown, and it was considered phenomenal that Irving was able to give two hundred and ninety-four performances as Digby Grant. At the end of that time, he was engaged by Colonel H. L. Bateman for the company at the Lyceum.

The leading lady of the Lyceum company was the Colonel's daughter, Isabel. The theatre was not operating with very great success, and it was hoped that the engagement of Irving would revive the life of the venture. On November 20th, 1871, Irving appeared as Mathias in Leopold Lewis' adaptation of Erchmann-Chatrian's *Le Juif Polonais* (*The Polish Jew*) renamed, *The Bells*. The role definitely set Irving as an actor of note, and with his rise the fortunes of the Lyceum increased. *The Bells* was followed by W. G. Wills' *Charles I* in 1872, and the same playwright's *Eugene Aram* in the following year. On October 31st, 1874, Irving made his first appearance as Hamlet and set the long-run record for this play of two hundred consecutive performances.

The first-hand accounts of Irving the actor give us all manner of ideas as to how he must have performed. The main point of criticism seems to have been Irving's mode of speech. Henry Clapp writing in *The Atlantic* in 1884 charged the actor with "lingua-matricide . . . for night after night he has done foul murder upon his mother tongue." William Archer, the critic and Ibsenite, directed the question to Irving's audience: "Can any actor be so great who cannot pronounce his own language?" It is hard to diagnose at this distance of time the trouble in speech. There seems to have been no structural defect, but perhaps in an over zealous attempt to cure one ill, a strained and unnatural effect resulted. Many modern actors have tried to reproduce the weird vowel sounds of Irving and the halting delivery and, if they can be trusted the delivery of Irving must have come close to being ludicrous.

Even his most bitter detractors, however, cannot deny the man's virtues. He came into the English theatre at a period when staging had reached a low point. With the exception of a few of the London managers, most producers would mount their offerings as shabbily and as cheaply as the audience would allow. Henry Irving engaged the best talent available. At length, Gordon Craig, the son of Ellen Terry, after serving an apprenticeship in the company, went on to formulate his great techniques of stage production. Irving, too, exerted great effort to attract into the theatre the leading men of letters of the day. He produced Tennyson's *Queen Mary*, Charles Reade's *Nance Oldfield*, Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Story of Waterloo*, Mrs. Craigie's *Journey's End* in *Lovers' Meeting*,

and Dion Boucicault's version of Casimir Delavigne's *Louis XI*.

THE most interesting feature, however, of Irving's tenancy of the Lyceum is the acting company. Through it moved almost every actor or actress of note during the past sixty years of the English theatre. Its alumni went out to all corners of the world, and entered upon all forms of theatrical and even film entertainment. Until the present time, whenever two veteran actors of the English stage would meet, conversation was bound to turn upon their particular experiences in "The Governor's" company. A partial listing of these actors and actresses would include: Norman Forbes and his brother, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Sir John Martin Harvey, Dame May Whitty and Ben Webster (the parents of the contemporary directress - actress - producer, Margaret Webster), Maud Milton, Fuller Mellish, Louis Calvert, Laurence Irving, and George Alexander. Whatever the final opinion of Irving the actor, this list certainly speaks well for Irving the teacher and trainer of actors. It is doubtful if ever in the history of the theatre, the acting profession has been so widely affected by a single individual.

Sir Henry's management of the company was autocratic and stern. The pattern for both on and off-stage deportment was set by "The Governor", and all the ladies and gentlemen of the company were expected to follow it without deviation. Infractions were punished with expulsion, and could cause the offender to be blackballed throughout the profession. The theatre had always carried about it a certain stigma which had caused its members to be looked upon as socially inferior. Irving realized that his conduct, and that of his associates, must be more than the norm of good behavior. His method, though hard on himself and his fellows, brought direct benefits to all. In July, 1895, Henry Irving was awarded a knighthood—the first such honor granted an actor. Thus, official recognition was awarded to the artistry and respectability that Irving had brought to a profession which, even to this day, is too often noticeably lacking in both of these attributes.

It is interesting to survey the range of roles enacted by Irving during his career. In the plays of Shakespeare, alone, he appeared as: Hamlet, Othello and Iago in *Othello*, Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Cardinal Wolsey in *Henry VIII*, Macbeth, Coriolanus, and Romeo. In the plays of other dramatists, he played: Charles I, Mathias in *The Bells*, Richilieu in Bulwer's drama of that name, Louis XI, Dubosc and Lesurgues in *The Lyons Mail*, Dori-court in *The Belle's Stratagem*, the Vicar in W. G. Wills' dramatization of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Mephistopheles in *Faust*, Arthur in Comyns Carr's *King Arthur*, Don Quixote,

\$100 Prize

IN order to encourage the submission of original scripts, the Johns Hopkins Playshop will offer a prize of \$100.00 for the best full-length play submitted before December 15. Any playwright in the United States is eligible to submit one or more manuscripts, with an estimated playing time of two to two and one-half hours. Plays with a small cast, one set, based upon a sound vital idea are preferred. A registration fee of \$1.00 must accompany each entry.

All manuscripts must be postmarked not later than December 15, 1946, and should be addressed to the Johns Hopkins Playshop, Homewood, Baltimore 18, Md. Receipt of a play will not be acknowledged unless a stamped, addressed card or envelope is enclosed.

the Old Soldier in Conan Doyle's *Tale of Waterloo* and the title role in *Becket*. It was in the last named role that Irving made his final appearance. It was in the theatre at Bradford, in 1905, and his concluding line, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit" was indeed prophetic. Soon after the great actor was being borne to the place of honor in London's Westminster Abbey.

ONE of the features of the activity at the Lyceum which always held great charm was the on-stage party. After first performances, or in honor of some visiting dignitary, or to mark an anniversary, Irving would stage gigantic parties on the stage of the theatre after a performance. The actors would retire

to remove the accoutrements of the performance, the stage-hands would remove the encumbrances of the play, and the audience (or that part of it which had been invited to the festivity) would wait about in the auditorium or the lobby. Then, when all was in readiness, the curtain would rise and the stage would be set with banquet tables and foods and wines. These parties became a traditional part of Irving's regime at the theatre. To them were invited the leaders of all the arts, and they offered a meeting place for these people when such places were not as available as in our day.

Irving visited the United States on several occasions—playing not only in New York but all about the country. With his leading lady, Ellen Terry, and many of the famous aforementioned actors in his company, he brought to the American people the same plays which had delighted the London audiences. His reception in this country was always most enthusiastic, and this friendship was repaid by Irving's treatment of the American actors when they came to England. One of the most famous instances was his friendship with Edwin Booth, which extended over many years. When Booth went to England in the 1870's, he joined forces with Irving to produce one of the outstanding productions of *Othello* of all time. One evening the role of Othello would be played by Booth with Irving doing Iago; the next evening the two actors would switch roles. With Ellen Terry playing Desdemona, this must have been a memorable event.

On his tours, too, Irving played in the capitals of Europe—often in cooperation with some of the French or German or Italian actors. He conducted a series of debates with the great French theatrician, Coquelin, which should be required reading for any students of the theatre. In them the two great actors formulated their personal theories of the art of which they were such outstanding exemplars. In addition to these debates, many of Irving's lectures and writings have been collected and published, so that we can study and profit from them.

Of Irving's wife little is known but his two children, H. B. and Laurence Irving, both followed their father into the theatre. The latter, in particular, seemed to exhibit some of the feeling for the art which had marked Sir Henry so strongly.

It is all but impossible for us to recreate the theatre of seventy-five years ago. Changes in the drama, in staging in the physical aspects of the theatre, in the prestige and standing of the theatre personnel—all have been revolutionized. Henry Irving is the individual in the English-speaking theatre who did most to bring this change about. He was able in his lifetime—through the spirit and the artistry he brought into the theatre—to see the theatre mature, take on artistry and assume its place in the forefront of the arts.

Next issue: "Mei Lan-fang"

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The One-Act Play as Theatre

By R. C. HUNTER

Department of Speech, Ohio Wesleyan University

JUST what do we mean when we speak of the one-act play? Certainly we do not mean the "curtain raiser" or the vaudeville sketch which have been part of a long tradition of theatrical history. Rather, we refer to that specialized dramatic form whose history began, scarcely sixty years ago and whose early development in Europe was greatly stimulated by Antoine's "Free Theatre" and its successors in England, Ireland and on the continent. In his book, *The Craftsmanship of the One-Act Play* (1924), Mr. Percival Wilde thus defines this dramatic type: "A one-act play is an orderly representation of life, arousing emotion in an audience. It is characterized by superior unity and economy; it is playable in a comparatively short space of time; and it is intended to be assimilated as a whole." In an earlier book, *The Technique of the One-Act Play* (1918), Prof. B. Roland Lewis says of the one-act play: "In its finished and more significant form it is not a 'playlet' nor a 'sketch,' nor a so-called 'skit' nor a play that is merely short. These seldom or never aim at a definite and unmistakable unity either in purpose or in construction; they are not art. On the other hand, the one-act play has for its end a singleness of impression—a definite artistic effect. The one-act form is to the longer dramatic piece what the highly developed short-story is to the novel." In another place Mr. Lewis says: "A finished cameo is quite as much a work of art as is the finished statue; yet both have mechanics and design in their structure; and probably those of the cameo are more deft and more highly specialized than those of the full-sized statue; and just in proportion as the cameo requires much more delicate workmanship than does the statue, so the one-act play must be well-made or the chances are that it will not be a genuine art product."

The other term which needs definition is "theatre." Manifestly, the last of Mr. Webster's definitions of this term is the one here intended: "Material or method suitable for a theatrical production." Our inquiry, then, will seek to determine whether the one-act play, as we have here defined it, is well adapted in material and method to effective presentation in the theatre.

We must point out that we are not here concerned primarily with literary quality, but rather with theatrical effectiveness. It is true that the greatest drama has stood high when measured by either of these standards. Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Moliere are literary giants whose place in theatre history is secure. But we remem-

PROFESSOR HUNTER'S article is the first of a series of seven papers on the one-act play which we have scheduled for publication this season. In the November issue, Elizabeth McFadden, author of such well-known plays as *Double Door* and *Why the Chimes Rang*, will discuss the writing of the one-act play. The next five articles will be contributed by Talbot Pearson of the Department of Drama, Carnegie Institute of Technology, and veteran director in the Community Theatre. Mr. Pearson's first article (December issue) will consider the art of selecting the one-act play. In the next four articles he will discuss the science of directing the one-act play: drama, comedy-farce, melodrama, and the fantasy.

We are especially pleased to offer our readers this series of articles designed primarily for those in the high schools and colleges who wish to expand their knowledge of the art of presenting the one-act play.—Editor.

ber also that men like Shelley, Browning, and Tennyson have written so-called "closet drama" of much literary charm but distinctly lacking in the elements of theatrical appeal. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether most critics would grant high literary eminence to Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* which, from the standpoint of pure theatre, stands almost unrivaled in the whole field of drama.

It will be worthwhile to review briefly the sixty-year history of the one-act play to determine whether or not it has actually been adapted in material and method to effective presentation in the theatre.

That the successful launching of Antoine's "Free Theatre" in 1887 was due in no small part to the theatrical effectiveness of a one-act play built around an incident in one of Zola's novels is a matter of record. This play, *Jacques Damour*, in which Antoine himself played the leading role, redeemed an otherwise mediocre bill of four one-acts with which this theatre was launched and won for Antoine the first critical approval of his venture. In the decade which followed many young writers, to whom the conservative, hide-bound professional theatre of France was closed, found a hearing in Antoine's theatre. Most of them wrote in the one-act form and gradually developed its technique. It remained, however, for the Irish dramatists and a few isolated Continental writers like Maeterlinck in Belgium and Schnitzler in Austria to bring the one-act play to a high eminence of literary quality and theatrical effectiveness. It cannot be denied, I think, that plays like Maeterlinck's *Interior* and *The Intruder* and Schnitzler's *Literature* and *The Affairs of Anatol* are both plays of quality and excellent theatre. But the full flowering of this form came in Ireland in the plays of William Butler Yeats, Lady

Augusta Gregory, John Millington Synge, and Lord Dunsany. Such plays as *The Land of Heart's Desire*, *The Gaol Gate*, *The Rising of the Moon*, *The Golden Doom*, and, especially, *Riders to the Sea* have tremendous power when adequately played and such charming little comedies as *Spreading the News*, *The Workhouse Ward*, and *The Lost Silk Hat* have delighted countless theatre audiences both abroad and in this country. We must also mention two English writers of sentimental comedy who have likewise achieved unusual success in the one-act form. I refer to J. M. Barrie and A. A. Milne whose short plays have proved almost if not quite as successful in the theatre as have their long plays. Many are the theatre audiences that have been charmed with such plays as *The Twelve Pound Look*, *Rosalind*, *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*, *The Man in the Bowler Hat*, and *Wurzel-Flummery*.

THE Little Theatre Movement came to this country about 1912. Along with it came the one-act play. The first few years of activity, before the first world war came along to absorb the energies of men and women both in and out of the theatre, saw the writing and production of several one-act plays which received instant and unqualified success in the theatre. Many of these are still our classics in the one-act form: Zona Gale's *Neighbors*, Eugene O'Neill's *In the Zone*, *Bound East for Cardiff*, and *Ile*, Cook and Glaspell's *Suppressed Desires* and Miss Glaspell's one-act tragedy, *Trifles*. Though three of these authors went on to win Pulitzer prizes with longer plays, it is doubtful if their longer plays were in general more theatrically effective. I do not believe that many critics would feel that Miss Glaspell's *Alison's House* has the sheer theatrical power of *Trifles* or that Zona Gale's *Miss Lulu Bett* possesses the rich, throbbing humanity of *Neighbors*. I am not even sure that the verdict as between O'Neill's *Ile* and his *Beyond the Horizon* would favor the longer play.

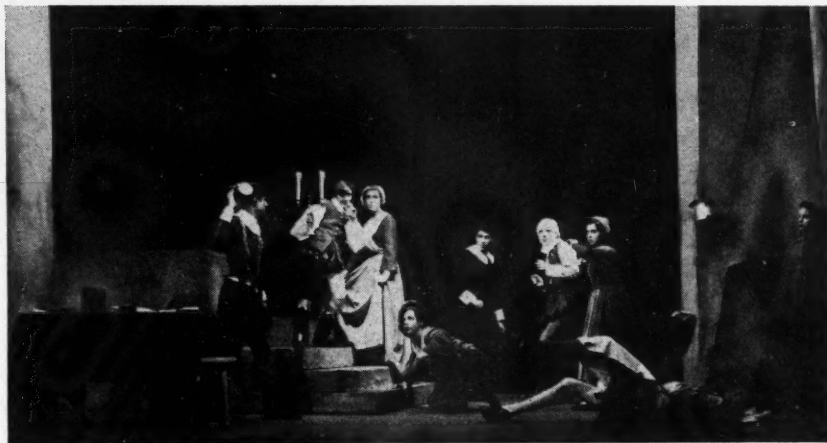
It is interesting to observe in the record of plays produced professionally in New York during the first world war that there are frequent listings of bills of one-acts. These seem to have been popular with the audiences of that period. Indeed, I remember vividly a thrilling evening in the theatre in 1916 when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan. The occasion was the presentation of a bill of one-acts by the Washington Square Players which was so soon to develop into the Theatre Guild. Three of the four plays I can recall clearly: Schnitzler's *Literature* and, especially Lady Gregory's *The Gaol Gate* and *The Rising of the Moon*. The next year, while teaching in a suburb of Detroit, I had the good fortune to play several parts in the Arts and Crafts Theatre, one of the pioneer Little Theatre groups, under the direction of Mr. Sam Hume. Most of our bills were

one-acts and we never lacked for appreciative audiences.

I think that no one who has followed closely the development of the American theatre in the period between the two world wars can fail to agree that, though the number of one-act plays written and offered for sale to producing groups during this period has been very great, there has been a deterioration in both literary quality and dramatic effectiveness as compared with the earlier period. There are, of course, a few exceptions. Some of Paul Green's plays fall into this category. From the standpoint of sheer theatre I suppose Hall and Middlemass' *The Valiant* has no equal among American one-acts. It has certainly won more contests than any other play of its kind. But the fact still remains that, outside of the Little Theatre and the educational theatre, the production of one-act plays is now practically non-existent. With the exception of O'Neill few of our major dramatists have written, at least significantly, in this form. This is true of Maxwell Anderson, Elmer Rice, Lillian Hellman, S. N. Behrman, Philip Barry, and most of the others. It has remained for school and college groups to keep alive and develop this form. But most of these groups, with the notable exception of the Carolina Playmakers, have, except for contest purposes, either devoted themselves almost entirely to the production of longer plays or used the one-act play for classwork or studio production for the training of student playwrights, actors, or technicians. It is now, I think, little used for the direct entertainment and stimulation of audiences.

We may say, then, in brief summary that the one-act play reached its highest point not only of literary eminence but also of general theatrical effectiveness in the period preceding the First World War and that the last twenty-five years have seen no widespread use of this form either in the professional theatre or in the non-professional theatre. What can we say of its future? Are there evidences that it will return to favor, that it will have a literary and theatrical rebirth? And, finally, what should be our own attitude as educators toward the further development and wider use of this dramatic form?

I think there are some evidences that the one-act play may again win qualified approval in the non-professional theatre and, possibly, to a very limited extent, in the professional theatre. The success of Noel Coward's program of one-acts entitled *Tonight at 8:30* might indicate that a competent and skilful dramatist can still win approval in the commercial theatre with one-act plays. But the greatest hope of development lies, I believe, in a revitalized and considerably extended community theatre. This development, if it takes place at all, will center, I believe, in the returned serviceman. Certainly he has had experiences which lend them-



Scene from a production of *Taming of the Shrew* at the Greenwich, Conn., High School (Thespian Troupe 243). Directed by Ruth Morgan.

selves to projection in this form.

What, finally, should be our function as educators in relation to the further development and use of this dramatic form? Though we may personally prefer the longer drama and though we may feel that our audiences, in general, prefer it, I believe that we must give the one-act more serious attention in planning our production program. You may feel, as I still do, that you prefer to work with the longer play. You may feel, as I do, that the handling of developing, changing characters is a greater challenge to your

more mature, more experienced actors and that the playing of these parts is a richer educational experience for them. You may feel, as I do, that it is difficult to find new and satisfying material in this form which combines some literary distinction with a manifestly strong theatrical appeal. You may feel, as I do, that even though you can find one or two plays which are fairly satisfactory in themselves you will have great difficulty in building a good program of three or four plays which will sustain the strong interest of your audience throughout the total performance. But if you and I insist on avoiding the one-act play altogether we must be prepared to take the consequences. Certainly, in the future as in the past, we shall want to build most of our undergraduate courses in playwriting around this form. Certainly we shall want to continue to use it in our acting and directing courses to give our students training and experience in these fields. If we do not encourage it, who will? Can we complain of a lack of theatrically effective one-acts if we do not provide some stimulation for writing them or a laboratory in which they can be tested?

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Act 1, scene 2, from *A Wilderness* staged at the Trenton, New Jersey, Central High School (Thespian Troupe 281). Directed by Elizabeth Dillon.

First Steps in Designing Scenery

The First of a Series of Seven Articles on Designing Scenery for the Stage

By A. S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, State University of Iowa Theatre, Iowa City, Iowa

REQUESTS have been received by our editor and passed on to me for a series of articles devoted to the subject of designing scenery for the stage. Supposedly, these articles are to embrace all of the steps that the scene designer takes from the time the script is first placed in his hands until the finished setting stands on stage awaiting the opening night curtain. It is further the desire of both the editor and the author to keep these discussions straightforward and simple so that they may prove a positive help to those teachers of dramatics and student-designers who have received no formal training in this field.

Unembarrassed by philosophical wanderings and beclouded aesthetic theories, the work of the modern scenic designer is not the complicated profession that many would have us believe. Reduced to its lowest common denominator, it is the creation of a background or environment against which the characters and action of a play seem at home. Perhaps a better way of defining it would be to draw a parallel between designing a costume and a set of scenery. There seems to be little difficulty in understanding what a tremendous aid a well planned costume can be in establishing the various traits of personality for a given character. From an actor's costume we can tell something of the character's social standing, his age, his health and state of mind, the period in which he lives as well as some suggestion about country and locale. So it is with scenery; in fact we might even consider the setting as the costume of the play. A properly designed setting can give an audience as much information about the play as the costume did for the actor. If we will look at scenery in this light, as a device that will help establish the character of a play, rather than as a series of scenes used to mask off the backstage areas, there would be many more interesting backgrounds for our plays than there are now.

IT might help clarify the various phases of the scene designer's work if we were to assume that we are to design a given play for a specific theatre and then take up in logical order each step for discussion. To make our example even more exacting, let's further assume that we are working in a new position and on a stage with which we are unfamiliar.

The first play of this imaginary season is to be Patterson Greene's *Papa Is All*. This is a delightful play about a Pennsylvania Dutch mother, daughter and son who finally break into open revolt against "Papa" who misuses the Mennonite customs to maintain tyrannical control of his

family. The first reading of the script should be done rapidly, as you would read a murder mystery, with the idea of simply becoming familiar with the play, the characters and plot. You are much more likely to have a clearer impression of the nature of the play from such a reading than had you stopped to consider each reference to the setting and each bit of stage directions. This first impression is quite important to the designer, for it is this feeling of whether the play is light or heavy, amusing or sad, satirical or serious, or of some other nature, which you as a designer try to incorporate into your design.

The second reading is in reality a careful study of the script. Jot down each reference to the setting that occurs either in the dialogue or in the stage directions. Note such items as the new window draperies, the newly installed telephone and the additional potted flowers that are more or less symbols of the new freedom enjoyed by the Aukamp family after Jake has disposed of "Papa." Any hint or reference should be noted that will either directly or indirectly affect the design of the setting. Even experienced designers find such a check list invaluable as it provides a buffer against those last few hectic days of production preparation when it is so easy to overlook some detail that may make the difference between a setting which is just adequate or one that proves to be a definite asset to the play.

It is not often that the designer will find as much helpful information in the playwright's description of the setting as Mr. Green has provided for the Aukamp kitchen. He has presented in a few phrases the key to a successful design for his play. For instance: "Although the evening light that fills it belongs to May of 1941, the kitchen itself might well have existed intact in a period fifty years earlier." . . . "If the spectator fancies Early American, he will take pleasure in much that he sees." . . . "The room is radiantly clean, but its charm is more apparent to the 'foreigner' than to the Aukamp household." With such suggestions as these it is not difficult for the designer to find an arrangement that expresses the same idea. As to the specific architectural features required by the play, our check list notes that there are two windows in the back wall on either side of the main entrance which opens into a closed porch that houses the pump and wash stand. There is a second door leading to the parlor and a third to Emma's room while a run or stairs leading to the bed rooms above will be needed. The necessary furnishings include a kitchen stove, cup-

boards, a hooded dresser, a kitchen table and chairs, two arm chairs and a footstool. These are the essential items, it is up to us to find some arrangement of them that will best fit our stage and still be usable from the standpoint of the director and actors and at the same time expressive of the play.

IT'S at this point that the designer should put aside the script and begin to do a little original thinking about the play and its setting and to the stage on which it will be produced. All too often the inexperienced designer or director will turn hungrily to photographs of the New York production or to pictures of the same play produced elsewhere and slavishly set about making duplicates of them. They ignore the fact that their stage may not be large enough to accommodate them, or that they lack the proper equipment and experience. These are brushed aside in their desire to follow each suggestion they see either in print, plan or photograph. They apparently feel that anything is justified as long as they may say, "But that is practically the way they did it in New York." Usually such settings no longer resemble the original because they have been cramped and simplified to force them on a stage too small so that the total effect is unsatisfactory; even at best they are but imitations of another's ideas. Anyone with the welfare of his theatre at heart or with any pride in his own work, dislikes to copy or imitate someone else's ideas. He will strive for a design that has some originality about it, that will best express the idea of the play under the conditions established by the director and the stage that is to house it. This may result in a setting that differs radically from that used elsewhere, but as long as it expresses the play you will find that the playwright is the first to commend you for departing from his description of the set in order to adjust the design to your stage.

Designing scenery not only implies the creation of a background that is appropriate for a given play, but that it is designed to fit upon a particular stage. Scenery is essentially "custom" built. Stages vary tremendously in their plan, dimensions and equipment to such an extent that it precludes the possibility that scenery designed for one theatre will fit equally well on all others. This is especially true in many of the high schools, college and community theatres about the country where the stages have been made over in buildings designed for another purpose or have been constructed as stages but have been poorly planned. Some of you who read this will know instantly what I mean when I speak of these built-in limitations for the obvious reason 'you've worked on stages of this type and have had to contend with them, but there will be others more fortunately located who may be skeptical as to the truth of this statement. A study of a dozen such theatres chosen at random will be all that is

needed to convince one of the almost impossible conditions confronting those whose responsibility it is to stage plays upon them.

SINCE for the sake of this project we are assuming that we are in a new job and unacquainted with the stage we're to work upon, it will be necessary to take a fifty foot steel tape and a six foot folding rule and investigate. It's as important for us as scenic designers to know the dimensions and peculiarities of our stage as it is for the costumer to know the physical dimensions of the actor for whom he is making a costume. As a matter of fact, it is much more expensive and time-consuming to correct a bad fit in scenery than it is to alter a costume, consequently the time spent in becoming thoroughly familiar with the stage is well worth the effort. Unless you know, or have readily available in plan form, the following information about your stage, you have been working partially blindfolded and with considerable risk of mistakes that can prove costly either to the standard of your production or to your budget.

This list should include the following information:

1. The depth and width of the apron.
2. Location and type of footlights.
3. Width, height and thickness of the proscenium arch.
4. The type and position of the main curtain.
5. The dimensions of both tormentors and teaser and the limits of their adjustability.
6. The light bridge or light border, its capacity, manner of operation and the relationship to the proscenium arch.
7. The number, locations, capacity and type of all battens by which scenery can be flown.
8. The depth of the stage from the upstage side of the proscenium arch to the back wall.
9. The shape and the relationship of the back stage area to the proscenium.
10. The location and type of cyclorama.
11. The amount of available off-stage storage space.
12. The height of the stage from the floor to the grid or roof.
13. The location and size of any doorways or windows.
14. The position of the switchboard, its capacity, number of circuits, dimmers, etc.
15. The location of the stage manager's desk, back-stage light controls, phone or signal systems.
16. The width and length of the auditorium. The seating arrangements and the location of the extreme side seats in the first and last rows of both orchestra and balcony. (These will be required for sight line drawings.)
17. The height of the stage floor above the auditorium level.
18. The amount of drop there is in the auditorium floor from the back of the house to the apron.
18. The notations as to the size and position of any structural feature of the stage that will demand consideration in the plan of the setting or the storage of scenery.

With this information in note form at our elbow, our first job is to make a scaled, mechanical drawing showing the stage and its equipment in plan. This view represents the stage as it would appear to anyone looking down on it from above. On it can be shown accurately the majority of the items listed above.

Statistical Summary of the 1945-46 Thespian Season

(This summary is based upon data furnished by 461 Thespian-affiliated schools reporting as of August 1, 1946. The total number of schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society on this date stood at 731.)

Number of major productions reported..... 965*
Average number of major play productions among schools reporting..... 2.10
Estimated number of major productions given during the year by all schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society..... 1,535
Distribution of major play productions among schools reporting:

SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF MAJOR PLAY PRODUCTIONS
17	0
92	1
216	2
109	3
20	4
6	5
1	6

Number of schools reporting evenings of one-act plays given during season..... 62
Number of one-act play productions reported as of August 1, 1946..... 1,820
Average number of one-act play productions given during the season by the 461 schools reporting..... 4
Estimated number of one-act play productions given during the season by all Thespian-affiliated schools..... 3,024
Number of schools reporting productions of operettas, pageants, revues, minstrel shows, choric festivals, etc..... 237
Number of schools reporting participation in play festivals and contests..... 182
Number of schools reporting broadcasting activities over radio stations..... 106
Most frequently produced full-length plays among Thespian-affiliated schools during the 1945-46 season:

TITLE	NUMBER OF PRODUCTIONS	TITLE	NUMBER OF PRODUCTIONS
<i>Snafu</i>	20	<i>Ever Since Eve</i>	13
<i>Junior Miss</i>	20	<i>What a Life</i>	13
<i>The Fighting Littles</i>	20	<i>A Little Honey</i>	12
<i>Brother Goose</i>	19	<i>Lost Horizon</i>	12
<i>You Can't Take It With You</i>	17	<i>The Man Who Came to Dinner</i>	11
<i>Don't Take My Penny</i>	16	<i>Little Women</i>	10
<i>Come Rain or Shine</i>	15	<i>The Doctor Has a Daughter</i>	10
<i>Spring Green</i>	15	<i>Janie</i>	10
<i>Best Foot Forward</i>	14		

* These figures include evenings of one-act plays considered the equivalent of full-length plays, but do not include productions such as operettas, pageants, musical shows and other special performances.

There is no need to be discouraged at the prospect of drafting; the type we shall do in our work is simple and the equipment required to do it with is inexpensive. A drafting board 20 by 26 inches will be needed, a T-square with a shaft long enough to reach across the length of the board, two triangles, one 45 degree and one 30-60, a good pencil compass, an architect's scale rule (Dietzgen No. 31626) a number H or 2H drafting pencil, eraser, paper and thumbtacks will complete the kit. The whole outfit need not cost more than five dollars. An hour's reading in some good text on elementary drafting is all that will be required to learn how to use your drafting instruments and a half hour more will tell you how to use the scale rule. Really, it is just as easy as that. French and Svenson's *Mechanical Drafting for High Schools* is an excellent text and chapter II tells you how to use these new tools accurately, and with a little practice, both quickly and skillfully.

Most of the mystery and all of the guess work in designing can be eliminated by use of a scale rule. It is as indispensable to the designer as a hammer would be to the carpenter. Since our stage and the setting are much too large to be drawn full size on a sheet of drafting paper, it will be necessary to draw it in reduced proportion. This is accomplished by allow-

ing a fractional part of a foot to represent a full foot on the drawing. The scale rule recommended for this work is triangular in shape and has ten different scales plus the regular linear foot of twelve inches with each inch divided into sixteenth. The scales most frequently used by the designer are the 1"=1'-0", 3/4"=1'-0" 1/2"=1'-0", 3/8"=1'-0", and 1/4"=1'.

Mount a sheet of heavy drafting paper 19"x24" on your board. Square the paper with the board by aligning one edge of it with the T-square shaft. Fasten the paper tightly to the board with thumb tacks or scotch tape. Now select the largest dimensions of your stage. Usually these are the width of the back stage area and the distance from the apron to the back wall of the stage. With these two dimensions find the largest scale that will permit you to lay them out within the limits of your paper. Find the center line of your paper and divide these dimensions equally on either side of it. This will automatically space your plan of the stage on the paper. With your stage so blocked out, it is quite easy to draw in accurately all of its structural features. When you are certain that your drawing is accurate, place a piece of tracing paper over the drawing and using ink or a soft pencil trace over the original. Blue prints can be made from this tracing and will eliminate the need of redrawing the stage for each new design job.

The Radio Program of the Month

By S. I. SCHARER, Radio Department

New York University, Washington Square, N. Y.

The purpose of this department is to direct attention to the outstanding radio programs on the air during the 1946-47 school year. Comments and suggestions from readers are welcomed by the Department Editor.

America's Town Meeting of the Air

Over A. B. C. Network
(Thursday, 8:30-9:30 P. M., EWT)

Readers are urged to check with the local newspapers regarding hour America's Town Meeting of the Air program is broadcast over radio stations serving the area.

THERE are more than a few good forum programs on the air today, but one stands head and shoulders above the others, "America's Town Meeting to the Air." This program has consistently presented outstanding personalities discussing timely topics during the eleven years it has been functioning.

Here is a show which combines good showmanship with the issues of the day so well, that it has probably received more awards than any other program of its kind on the air. George V. Denny Jr., the program's founder and moderator, is especially proud of the George Foster Peabody awards, radio's Pulitzer prize, won in 1944 and 1946. Other awards conferred upon this popular program are the Radio Guide's "medal of merit" in 1937, 1938, and 1939; "Radio Daily's" 1945 and 1946 awards; and three "certificates of merit" from the "Women's Press Club of New York" in cooperation with the National Federation of Press Women.

The idea for "Town Meeting of the Air" resulted from a chance remark a friend made to Mr. Denny. He told him about a neighbor who was so convinced that he was right and President Roosevelt was wrong that he refused to listen to any of the President's fireside chats. Mr. Denny, at the time Associate Director of Town Hall, New York, believed passionately that Town Hall's work of presenting both sides of political questions was one of the great educational services of the country and should be made available to such die-hards as this neighbor.

The probable outcome of people shutting their minds to all discussion except that which appealed to their prejudice, reasoned Denny, was the eventual endangering of our democratic form of government. The intimacy of early American communal life with its town meetings to resolve political differences was gone. In a complex industrial civilization, a man might shut himself up and read only the newspapers he approves, listen only to friends who believed as he does, close his mind to all opposite thought. So George Denny decided to try to recapture the democratic way of thinking and of solving problems through the medium of radio.

The result was "America's Town Meeting." The meetings began with a series of six experimental programs starting

May, 1935, and ending in July. Following the first broadcast, at which four speakers—Lawrence Dennis, A. J. Nuste, Norman Thomas, and Raymond Moley—discussed: "Which Way America—Fascism, Communism, Socialism, or Democracy?" Three thousand letters poured into the offices of Town Hall and the radio stations. Apparently, the program filled a vital need.

The continued success of this popular forum can be accredited to George V. Denny Jr., for it is his fine sense of showmanship and unerring flair for the dramatic which for over ten years has kept this program out in front. It was Denny who kept the program from being just dry debates; it was fun to go to "America's Town Meeting," where the crier sang out: "Town Meetin' tonight! Town Meetin' tonight!" And it was George Denny, as moderator, who kept the show moving at a quick, exciting pace for the next sixty minutes.

Most of the outstanding figures in national affairs have been presented by George Denny at some time or other during the last ten years. Among the famous speakers who have appeared on the program, in addition to all the leading senators and congressmen have been: Wendell L. Wilkie, Dorothy Thompson, Frank Knox, Harold L. Ickes, Frances Perkins, Jan Masaryk, John Gunther, Pearl Buck, Carl Sandburg, Mrs. J. Boardman Harriman, Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt—to pick only a few at random from the long list of prominent names.

But it's not prominent names alone that insures a program's success. Since "Town Meeting" discusses controversial topics which are important *now*, every effort must be made to anticipate what is going to be "on top of the news" two or three weeks ahead of time so that all preparations may be made. This is where Mr. Denny works in close cooperation with Marian Carter, Director of the Radio Forum division of Town Hall.

MRS. CARTER holds down one of the stiffest jobs in radio. She shoulders the responsibility of securing the speakers for the renowned forum. That job is far from easy, for every week the program must present the most authoritative speakers on both sides of the subject.

Considerable aid to Mrs. Carter in her selection of speakers is a unique filing system she had worked out. In this file she keeps a list of important subjects, cross-indexed with the expressions of prominent figures on that subject. By referring to her file, Mrs. Carter can, in almost less time than it takes to tell, draw up a list of a dozen or so people she would

like to appear on "Town Meeting" to discuss a specific topic.

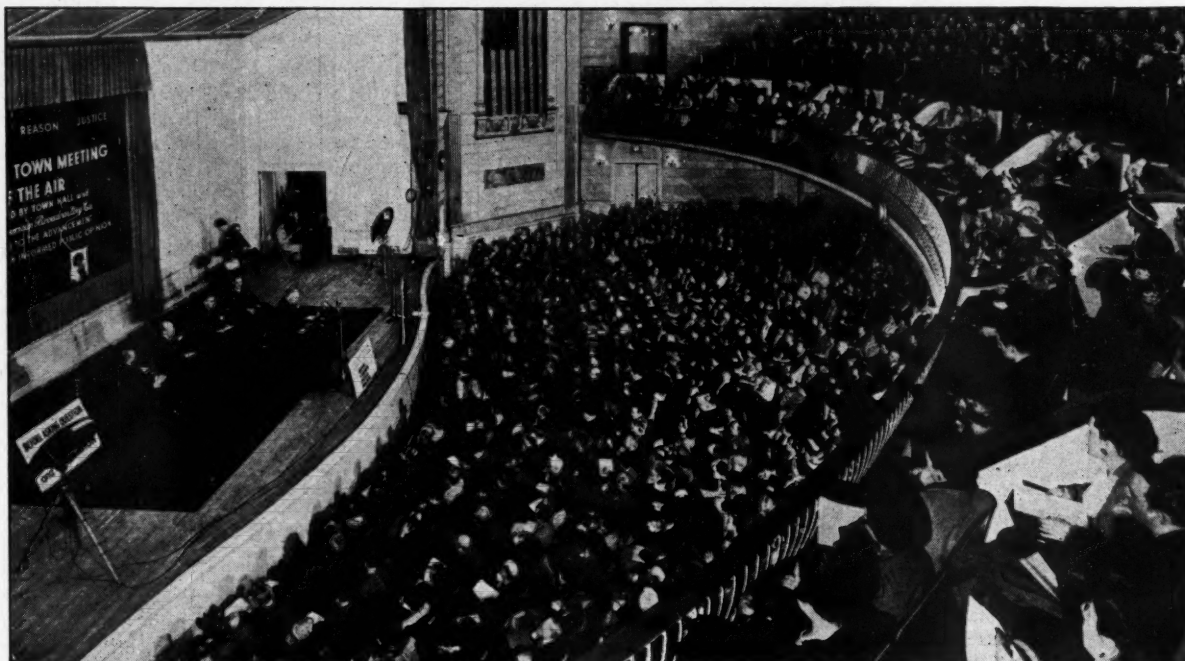
It's up to Mrs. Carter to watch the current events with an eagle eye and detect situations which might develop into international or national issues of interest to the general public. Together with Mr. Denny and his staff, she aids in the choice of future topics. She must know what views are held by outstanding leaders on important questions which may come before "America's Town Meeting." In order to manage this Herculean job, Mrs. Carter reads nine or ten newspapers a day, innumerable monthly magazines, and keeps an ear tuned to the radio for possible speakers for the program.

In approaching potential speakers, Mrs. Carter finds that many of them, while firm in their convictions, are reluctant to voice these over a national hookup. For instance, during election year some politicians like to smoke-screen their voting records and maintain a discreet silence over causes in which they are interested. Industrialists are often reluctant to speak on the labor question. Many groups have their taboos and it takes the proper kind of persuasion to inveigle them into permitting members to take a stand.

Unlike most radio shows, there is a minimum of rehearsal for "Town Meeting." About noon on the day of the broadcast the speakers scheduled for the evening's fracas are called together by Mr. Denny. At this meeting Mr. Denny has those who have not previously appeared on his program make recordings of their voices. Then these recordings are played back and suggestions are made to improve their delivery. This may seem a peculiar arrangement but Denny finds that although he deals every week with leaders in government, labor, industry, and all walks of life, they are, for the most part, amateurs in radio. Denny's tips to them are most effective radio technique. A professor, though brilliant, may have practically copied a chapter out of his latest book for the benefit of listeners. The result is poor showmanship. Points in technique that Denny stresses with his guests are such things as: weeding out and eliminating words with ambiguous meanings, avoiding the use of too many quotes, avoiding dropping the voice at the end of sentences so that they are lost to the radio audience, and—one of the most important points of all—using language that is as simple as possible.

At this meeting, too, speakers upholding the same side of a question get together and arrange their speeches so that there is no unnecessary repetition. At the same time, duplications are avoided, agreements and disagreements between the opposing factions are arrived at, and all the talks are integrated, making a whole instead of many disjointed parts. This is one of the reasons "Town Meeting" has been successful in holding listener interest where less well planned programs have failed.

Denny informs his guests that the purpose of the show is that of clarifying confusing issues and for that reason each will have to stick to his allotted time of five minutes. Otherwise some individual may not have an equal amount of time to present an opposing view. Denny has found, incidentally, that by appealing to



American Town Meeting of the Air at Town Hall, New York City, during broadcast over WJZ, Thursday, April 18, 1946, during debate, "Is Franco-Spain a Threat to World Peace?" George V. Denny Jr., is at the speaker's desk. Other speakers, seated left to right, are: Cecil Brown, Vincent Sheean, Lothrop Stoddard, and C. G. Paulding.

his guests on the basis of the spirit of fair play he can obtain the results desired.

At eight o'clock, a half-hour before air time, Mr. Denny gets up on the stage and opens the discussion of the topic of the week. This warm-up period is not heard by the radio audience, of course, but is used as a device to obtain the greatest possible interest on the part of the participating audience and makes for a more exciting production.

The listeners at home know the program is about to begin when they hear the familiar call of the Town Crier, "Town meetin' tonight! Town meetin' tonight!" Then Denny in his capacity as moderator introduces the question of the evening. He has introduced such varied topics as: "What Must We Do to Help Feed Europe?"; "Do Our Movies Tend to Raise or Lower Our Moral Standards?"; "Who Should Control the Production and Use of Atomic Energy?"; "Have Britain and America Any Reason to Fear Russia?"; "Should We Continue the Draft Beyond May Fifteenth?"; "What Are the Real Issues Behind the Russian and Iranian Dispute?"; "Is Franco a Threat to World Peace?"; "What Should Be Our Policy Towards Russia?"; "Is Big Business Too Big?"; "Is Continuance of the OPA Needed to Prevent Inflation?"; "Are We Moving Toward a Government Controlled Economy?"; "Is the Veteran Getting a Square Deal?"; "Should Congress Lead or Follow Public Opinion?".

After each guest is given his five minutes to present his views, Denny calls them together around the microphone and leads the discussion. This lasts for approximately eight minutes. Then the fur begins to fly thick and fast; the audience is permitted to direct questions at the speakers. The procedure is a simple but effective one. Ten or more assistant moderators pass up and down the aisles during the broadcast with white question cards and colored recognition cards. If a member of the audience wants to ask a question, he signals an assistant moderator, who

OTHER POPULAR FORUM PROGRAMS

People's Platform, Sunday, 1-1:30 p. m., CBS.

Chicago Round Table, Sunday, 1:30-2:00 P. m., NBC.

American Forum, Tuesday, 9:30-10:00 p. m., Mutual.

supplies him with a white card on which he writes his question and his name and address. If the assistant moderator passes the question in its original or revised form, the person is given a colored recognition card which he holds up during the question period to signal the moderator that he has an approved question. The color of the card also indicates the speaker to whom the question is directed. When he is recognized by the moderator he reads the question.

Very often Denny has to use his wits to keep the questioner from departing radically from the original approved question. He prevents speech-making from the floor of the audience with a great deal of tact and humor. With the same skill he rules out questions which are a direct personal attack on one of the speakers.

Presence of mind is one of the qualities a good moderator must have and Denny

has had more than his share of moments when he had to demonstrate it. At the end of the program the town crier is supposed to indicate that the program is going off the air by calling "Town Meetin' tonight!" On one occasion the town crier got so interested in the discussion that he wandered out into the audience and forgot to come back to do his stint. Denny did not realize this until the time came for taking the program off the air. Grasping the situation at a glance, he picked up the microphone, carried it off stage and from there called "Town meetin' tonight!"

To pick up the voices of questioners from the audience, "Town Meeting" uses an unusual microphone. It is known as the parabolic "mike." This bowl-like instrument has a shallow concave rim four feet in diameter with a regular microphone in the center.

The question and answer period of "America's Town Meeting of the Air" is one of the contributing factors to its great success. In radio it is important, as in many other things, to give people the feeling of participation. To have four speakers present their views and then discuss these views among themselves is one manner of presentation; to combine this with a question and answer period is a much more effective one.

CBS' "People's Platform" is another example of a forum that has a great deal to offer its listeners. On this program guest speakers and moderator discuss topics similar to those on "Town Meeting" in a very informal manner, but the program lacks the suspense and appeal that come from allowing the audience to participate. It should be said in all fairness, however, that the informal method of discussion used on "People's Platform" is more easily understood than the more formal speeches on Denny's show.



George V. Denny Jr., and Marian S. Carter of America's Town Meeting of the Air.

THE FILM OF THE MONTH

By HAROLD TURNEY, Chairman,
Department of Drama, Los Angeles City College,
Los Angeles, California

This department is designed to direct attention to the outstanding motion pictures of the 1946-47 season. Suggestions for future discussions are welcomed by the Department Editor.

HENRY V

UNTIL World War II, Hollywood was the unchallenged ruler of motion pictures around-the-globe. Indeed, its films, with their technical polish, dominated the screens of the nations and influenced the work of film-makers in almost every country. In England the movie executives, content to follow where Hollywood led, accepted without question or effort an inferior status.

Then came the war and in its testing violence a spontaneous cleansing of institutions, a revaluation of personal standards. The Nazi bombs that shattered English homes and film studios did more than merely blast bricks and mortar. They also swept away those in England's film industry who had been responsible for the policy of cheap imitation. Britons with stamina for a fight found various pretexts for their hurried departure to Hollywood. With them went most of the American executives who had produced films in England only because quota regulations had to be satisfied. They saw no prospect for film-making during a war period. To other more likely fields were transferred the activities of the speculators. These men of many nationalities owed allegiance only to the idea of small effort and large profits. In wartime they could no longer operate.

Temporarily, the British film industry came to a standstill. When it re-started, the New Deal was in operation. For the British people the cowardly illusion of Munich had been shattered. The native film-maker felt the necessity to mirror the awakening of his own people. Europe's drama and Britain's role in a worldwide war provided film material of an epic quality and only cliché-clouded minds could have remained unmoved by its obvious appeal or have failed in the glorious opportunity it provided.

Happily, the bonds of restraint had been removed. The creative worker, so long manacled, was now free to truth and reality as he saw and felt it, and not as the box office was alleged to require it. The results stirred England and astounded the world. Despite the inconveniences of almost continuous enemy action, the poverty of technical equipment, shortages of materials and labor, and a hundred-and-one other handicaps, British production yielded a rich output and motion pictures like *In Which We Serve*, *The Way Ahead*, *The Stars Look Down*, *Millions Like Us*, *Waterloo Road*, *The Way to the Stars*, *The Lamp Still Burns*, to mention only a few, brought to British and American film-goers, almost for the first time, the solid quality of entertainment poignant with truth. This at a time when Hollywood, seemingly more divorced than ever from the revo-

lutionary realities of a struggling world, was serving a steady diet of escapist farces.

The result was as encouraging as it was inevitable. Long before World War II had reached its end, British films were recognized and applauded on the screens of the world. To prove the statement, look at the English motion picture masterpieces around you today: *Blithe Spirit*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *The Captive Heart*, *The Gay Intruders*, *Hotel Reserve*, *Journey Together*, *The Man in Grey*, *The Seventh Veil*, *They Were Sisters*, *Vacation from Marriage*, *The Way Ahead*, and the leader of them all, *Henry V*.

Shakespeare to the Fore

IT is notable—and a bit ironic—that some of the critical raves which have followed the showings of *Henry V* in the key cities of America have underlined the competence of William Shakespeare as a writer for the screen. At the time of a brief but memorable flurry of Shakespearean pictures a decade ago—there were, perhaps you remember, the Warners' production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Mickey Rooney, Metro's *Romeo and Juliet* starring Norma Shearer, and the British-made *As You Like It*, all in the span of a year—precisely the same observation was made by the critics. Shakespeare was acknowledged as a promising screen writer who had "arrived." And yet the Laurence Olivier production of this all-British *Henry V* is the first of the Bard's classic dramas to be brought to the screen since that time.

Considering this curious inconsistency, there comes the question of why Shakespearean drama has not been more frequently produced on the screen. The answer is simply that the public has not sufficiently supported such ventures in the past. All three of the above-mentioned pictures, although favorably reviewed and received in first-run metropolitan locations, did not fare too happily in the smaller towns and subsequent-runs. Audiences, generally labeled "the masses", were largely unresponsive to them. Costumes and iambic pentameter made, apparently, too swift a change of pace for them. So the question now arises whether *Henry V* will meet the same fate—or whether it possesses popular values which will render it exceptional.

In our humble opinion, *Henry V* has what it takes to make it a "box office picture" in any town in the United States. For it is, first of all, spectacular in an eye-filing, action-crammed way—a brilliantly color-filmed pageant of medieval pomp and circumstance. The spirit and representation of the Battle of Agincourt, which comprises the central drama of the play, are magnificently accomplished by Mr. Olivier and his troupe. And this episode of the play, for which the original author regretfully apologized as being beyond the capacity of "this unworthy scaffold to bring forth," has been visioned in the mo-

tion picture in a manner to glorify the Bard.

Furthermore, the whole panorama of story before and after the big fight is projected in images suggestive of a richly animated tapestry. Costumes and scenery are exquisite, as becoming the majesty and boldly rhetorical eloquence of Shakespeare's unmatched verse. And the performance of Mr. Olivier as the vaunting, heroic king is in a style of self-confident regality which can be comprehended by all.

But more than the purely spectacular—yet equally intriguing—is the clever theatrical device used in the first half. The opening phase of the performance, presented as a play on the stage of the Elizabethan Globe Theater, with all the picturesque turmoil backstage and the motley characteristics of the audience, is fascinating to see—and gets the film over the heaviest and most difficult part of the play. Then a lapse into naturalistic staging for the scenes prefatory to the fight—and those subsequent to it—is effective in holding the interest and the eye.

The superlative preformances of an uncommonly well-trained British cast of players—which includes Renee Asherson as Katherine, Harcourt Williams as the King of France, Max Adrian as the Dauphin, and Leslie Banks as the Chorus—contributes further to the spirit and blend of the scenes. Music, too, is employed in a fashion that mesmerizes. In the end, the whole film results in a romantic and exciting action-play.

Faults in *Henry V*, which the public may frown upon, are those which the drama-educated, too, might find theatrically weak. They include the motivation of the plot, which is pompous and particularly difficult to understand. Also the many scenes holding the ludicrous shenanigans of the classic clowns (Bardolph, Nym and Pistol) and of the speeches of the Welsh, Scots and Irish captains which are too thickly dialectic to be either thoroughly understood or rightly appreciated. But for all that, *Henry V* is a splendid picture; and if Shakespeare doesn't click this time, there's little use in trying further.

Filming *Henry V*

by LAURENCE OLIVIER

THIS production of *Henry V* is, perhaps, the first serious attempt to make a truly Shakespearean film. Shakespeare, in a way, "wrote for the films." It has been suggested that if the movies had existed in 1599 he would have been the greatest film director of his day. However this may be, his splitting up of the action into a multitude of small scenes is almost an anticipation of film technique, and more than one of his plays seems to chafe against the cramping restrictions of the stage.

"Can this cockpit hold the vasty fields of France?" asks Chorus in the Prologue of *Henry V*. From the very beginning the play suggests a film. The speed of it is there: "With winged heels, like English Mercuries," the rapid change of scene: "And thence to France shall we convey you safe, and bring you back, charming the narrow seas." *Henry V* is also a play appropriate to the present time, for it tells of the unconquerable spirit of a people, describes the feeling of unity which draws

all together in the hour of danger.

For these reasons, and others, the play was chosen for filming, but there were many difficult things to be done and a hundred awkward problems to be solved—so many problems, in fact, that had it not been for the continual encouragement of J. Arthur Rank who controlled the purse-strings, and the unbounded enthusiasm of Filippo Del Giudice, managing director of Two Cities Films, our plans might never have come to fruition.

First, there was the question of the script. How many alterations and cuts ought we to make? In its long and checkered career, the play has often been cut and altered alarmingly. In the Restoration Period it was mutilated almost out of recognition. Kemble cut the text to tatters and Fielding wrote scornfully: "Shakespeare is already good enough for people of taste, but he must be altered to the palates of those who have none." Remembering this, we made only a few minute alterations in the text and the cuts are even less than those invariably made in a stage production.

The settings were a still greater problem. When the film was first discussed, we decided that the treatment would have to be new, yet in keeping with the period. The middle part of the film especially must have the feeling of the fourteenth century, but we could only achieve this aim if the settings and the general composition of the shots caught the spirit of fourteenth century paintings. How was this to be done? Paintings of the period flatten out the perspective, but we did not know how far film production could go in this direction.

Further unknown factors were the peculiar conditions of color and lighting. Artists of Henry V's day drew attention to certain parts of their pictures by using strong colors and shapes; and so, in translating this technique to the screen, a correct balance had to be struck between the colors and forms of the costumes and those of the background. When it was necessary to emphasize some character standing in a certain spot, this could only be done by a very careful choice of colors. Because the film was planned as a "painter's eye-view" of moving events, we decided to use only painted cut-outs for the background and not solid-built models.

This, of course, does not apply to the beginning of the film where a view of London is shown in the year 1600. For this we used an elaborate model based on Vischer's map view of London in the early seventeenth century. The model took three or four months to build in the Pattern Shop at Denham, was housed in two large tents, and then grouped piece by piece round the big tank at the studios.

While on the subject of models, we felt we achieved a minor triumph in dealing with the model shot of the invading English fleet. The technicolor camera, unlike the black and white film camera, has no variable speeds and, therefore, we were denied the normal means of getting the effect of perfect natural movement in



Scene from the motion picture, *Henry V*, with Laurence Olivier in the title role.

the model ships. We could perform no camera tricks, but with considerable ingenuity eventually succeeded in getting the ships to move at the correct roll and speed for the technicolor camera.

As to lighting, paintings of the fourteenth century have very little shadow and in some cases none at all. Would this style of art lend itself to the screen? A test set was built almost wholly in the style of a painting of the period, and results showed that certain compromises had to be made before we went into production.

The climax of the film centers around the Battle of Agincourt. Where were the battle scenes to be shot? In war-time there was no place suitable in England, but we found an admirable spot in Ireland in the Powerscourt demeane, and the Government of Eire came forward with generous offers of assistance. We were able to organize a large but peaceful expeditionary force, swelled by five hundred Irishmen who played the parts of foot soldiers and bowmen. They were all genuine soldiers, being members of the Eirean Home Guard.

A large camp was pitched on the estate, and run on strict military lines. Here, under canvas, we had hundreds of players, technical personnel, an armory, a wardrobe, a mess, workshops, and so on. Finally, John White, an Irish veterinary surgeon, found us 180 horsemen and horses needed for the French cavalry. These men, who came straight from the farms after the spring sowing, were splendid riders, and it was a stirring sight to see them charging into battle in full armor over the green fields of Ireland.

The advantages of filming in Ireland were even more apparent when certain exterior shots had to be taken in England; for valuable time was lost by waiting for aircraft to pass overhead, and also for the wind to disperse the vapor-trails.

How were we to discover the correct

family arms and accoutrements for our knights and soldiers? Roger Furse, our costume designer, was lucky enough to pick up an old book with a list of all who had fought at Agincourt, after which it was comparatively easy to work the matter out. Furse also designed about one hundred costumes for the thirty odd principals, many of which were made in Dublin by art students. The horses which took part in the battle had to be caparisoned, and this called for expert knowledge. The saddles were made of wood, on the pattern of Henry V's own saddle.

One of our severest tasks was to collect the hundreds of suits of armor required for the battle sequences. To dress an army seven hundred strong was not easy for there was little theatrical armor left in the country and no possibility of making any. We scoured the British Isles, collecting a piece here, a piece there.

Chain mail was another awkward problem, for Germany is the only country which makes and repairs it. Once again Ireland came to our help.

Our object was to keep the costumes as near as possible to the fourteenth century originals, and this involved a careful choice of fabrics, for at the time of Henry V the range was very narrow, and consisted mainly of wool cloth and heavy silk. We had also to arrange for our colors to correspond as closely as they might to the vegetable dyes of the Middle Ages, making allowances for the way in which color photography alters the tints.

These were only a few of the difficulties we had to overcome for there were no precedents to guide us. It was not a matter of applying known rules to a given problem, but of discovering rules as we went along.

Next Issue—*The Yearling*.

Theatre on Broadway

By PAUL MYERS

264 Lexington Ave., New York City

Readers of this magazine may order tickets for Broadway plays through Mr. Myers. Request should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Maid in the Ozarks

AS this is written, the Broadway theatre has been all but devoid of new activity for over two months. Two offerings made local bows during the month of July; not any during August. Of the two, one has long since closed and of the other one is tempted to remark: "The less said the better." It is quite likely that many of this page's readers have seen Claire Parrish's *Maid in the Ozarks*, which Jules Pfeiffer presented here late in July, since it came to us after playing over a large part of the country. It is rather disheartening to note that it is still playing (particularly when one reviews the many vastly more worthy plays which closed after too brief engagements); for it is the kind of fare which one would like to believe the theatre-going audience of New York would reject. A more pointless, inane, puerile play can not be imagined. It is most akin, in content and spirit, to the kind of thing that small boys write on fences to prove (to themselves) that they are mature. The action of the play is set in the kitchen of the Calhouns whom, the playwright avers, reside in a remote section of the Ozarks. Temple, the elder son, brings home a wife from the city who is as great a shock to the Calhouns as they are to her. For the remainder of the play all the characters deport themselves in a manner which, I feel certain, the natives of darkest Zambesi would deride. One is tempted to deplore at greater length such activity in the theatre, but too many worthwhile things demand attention.

Tidbits of 1946

The summer's other entry was a variety show, *Tidbits of 1946*, in which several assorted talents were displayed to very little advantage. Inherent in the revue were all the ills which killed vaudeville—routine sketches, a humdrum manner on the part of the performers, a re-hashing of never very popular music and (to paraphrase the Bard of Avon, who is most definitely out of place in such company) "a most plentiful lack of wit." Joey Faye was the headliner, and others involved were Muriel Gaines, Joshua Shelley, Josef Marais and Miranda—the last pair singers of quite charming South African folk songs, Lee Trent and The Debonairs. The sketches were written and directed by Sam Locke, and Arthur Klein supervised the production. *Tidbits of 1946* was not even acceptable "hot weather" fare.

Old Vic Company

Last May, however, an event of the greatest importance took place in the visit to New York of England's famed Old Vic Company. Headed by Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, Nicholas Han-

nen, Miles Malleon, Joyce Redman, George Relph, Margaret Leighton, Ena Burrill, and supported by Michael Warre, Harry Andrews, Nicolette Bernard, New York's theatregoers were treated to the type of ensemble playing which is the ultimate goal of most of the recently formed repertory companies which have been so notable a development of our post-war theatre. Of these groups; more anon. Let us first to the closer examination of the Old Vic.

The announcement by Theatre Incorporated, which had made its bow with the excellent revival of Shaw's *Pygmalion*, that they were to present to American audiences the company from the Old Vic was greeted with an overwhelming response. Long before the company had closed their London season and embarked for the United States, the entire seating capacity of the Century Theatre had been booked for the six week season promised. Four changes of bill were offered, and whatever doubts may have been entertained as to the merits of repertory theatre were dispelled before the English players had presented very many performances.

The initial performance was given on May 6th—a performance of the first part of Shakespeare's *King Henry IV*. This was followed at the next performance by the second part of *King Henry IV*, with a most interesting change of cast. Ralph Richardson played Sir John Falstaff in both parts, and made of the fat knight one of the most delightful comedy characters the modern stage has seen. He seemed to ferret from the text all of the humor, the gusto and the saltiness of one of Shakespeare's most rollicking clowns. Laurence Olivier enacted Hotspur, the fiery rebel in Part I, and the doddering Justice Shallow in Part II. In the latter role, particularly in the reception of Falstaff with Justice Silence (enacted by Miles Malleon), he threw a beam of artistry which illuminated one of the most obscure comedy scenes in Shakespeare. In fact, one marveled throughout at the seeming ease with which the company brought to life a play, which in the reading, seems at times to all but defy production. It has been most correctly stated by one of the theatre's experts that the reason for some of the loudly voiced disappointment after the Old Vic's premiere

was that many people expected something more bravura and sensational and all they received was just basically expert Shakespearean production. The merits of ensemble playing (that of a fixed company acting together over a period of time) were certainly proved by these two productions alone. Nicholas Hannen, who had not been seen in this country since *Accent on Youth* in 1934, played King Henry through both parts. Michael Warre played the Prince of Wales, who becomes Henry V, throughout. The rather small women's roles were played by Margaret Leighton as Lady Percy, Ena Burrill as Mistress Quickly and Joyce Redman as a thoroughly delightful Doll Tearsheet in Part II. Both plays were directed by John Burrell, with costumes and scenery by Roger Furse and Gower Parks respectively. Herbert Menges composed a most fitting musical score which he also conducted at each performance.

One is tempted to regale the readers of this page with all of the many creditable features of this production, but other things demand attention. The third and fourth bills of the Old Vic season, too, were most noteworthy. The third was a production of *Uncle Vanya*, staged by John Burrill. One can understand the motives behind a production of Chekhov's play of "scenes from country life" as much as one would have preferred any number of other items from the repertoire of this remarkable troupe. Chekhov, so intimately connected with the world renowned Moscow Art Theatre, has by this token become a symbol of all such theatrical organizations. In producing one of his plays, the Old Vic proved its allegiance and right to the kind of existence it has chosen for itself, and also proved its great versatility. A completely different note was sounded with this production, and the Messrs. Richardson, Olivier, Hannen, Relph and the Misses Burrill, Leighton and Redman were seen at great advantage.

The final bill comprised two shorter plays: William Butler Yeats' version of Sophocles tragedy, *Oedipus*, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's satiric comedy, *The Critic* or, *A Tragedy Rehearsed*. Two more diverse dramatic pieces can scarcely be imagined, and to see one group of actors step from the soaring Grecian tragedy to the 18th century foibles of cultured England was one of the most remarkable experiences the theatre has afforded. Mr. Olivier, for instance, played the title role in *Oedipus* and Mr. Puff, the Georgian dandy in the latter play. Mr. Richardson doubled as the oracular Tiresias in *Oedipus* and as Lord Burleigh. The Greek play was staged by Michel Saint-Denis, with costumes by Marie-Helene Daste and scenery by John Piper. Miles Malleon, whose roles in the other plays have been noted and who played Sir Fretful Plagiary in *The Critic*, directed Sheridan's satire. Tanya Moiseiwitsch designed both the costumes and the sets. Theatre Incorporated could not have better shown its merit as a producing organization than by importing the Old Vic Company. The newly formed American Repertory Theatre (of which more anon) which is to get under way

IN THE OFFING

The Front Page, a revival of the Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur play of the newspaper world, with Arnold Moss, Lew Parker, and Benny Baker.

The Girl from Lorraine, a new play about Joan of Arc by Maxwell Anderson, with Ingrid Bergman.

The Merry Wives of Windsor, a production of Shakespeare's comedy by the Theatre Guild Shakespearean Repertory Company.

Present Laughter, a production of Noel Coward's currently successful London comedy, with Clifton Webb.

this season, and all the theatregoers of this country, owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Henry V.

(See Film of Month in this issue.)

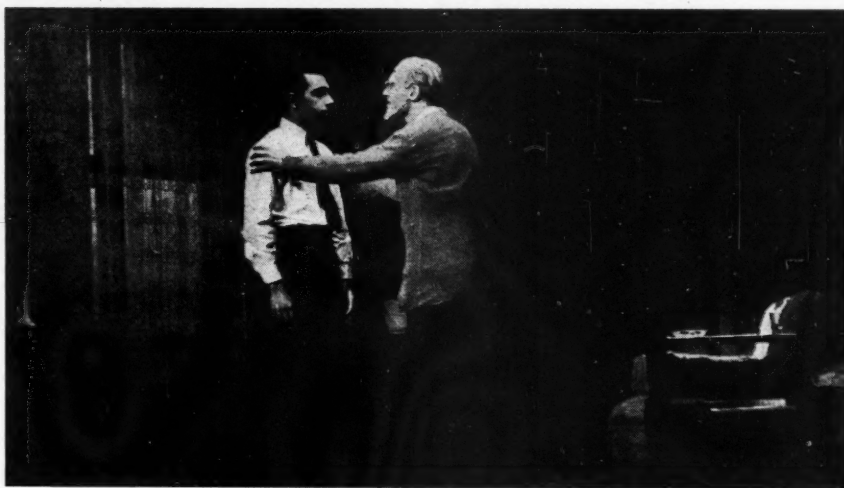
A comparable event, though in a different medium, was the long-awaited cinema production of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. After seeing the English troupe do both parts of *Henry IV*, it was a great privilege to be able to see Laurence Olivier and many of his associates in the Old Vic, enact the following play in the chronicle series. For the first time, film treatment of Shakespeare seemed right. Heretofore, notwithstanding the production and personnel and expense expended upon the effort, the results were not what one had hoped for. One wonders, while viewing *Henry V*, how anyone could possibly go wrong in doing Shakespeare before the camera.

Produced and directed by Mr. Olivier, designed by Paul Sheriff and Roger Furse, the film does indeed "hold the vasty fields of France" and does cram upon the screen rather than into the "wooden O" of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre "the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt." At the outset of the film we are swirled through space and time down into the Globe Theatre on the side of the Thames during a production of *Henry V* before an audience of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Very wisely, Mr. Olivier has not made wide departures from the text, and the superb lines of the Chorus are beautifully delivered by Leslie Banks.

The entire film is filmed in sumptuous technicolor, and the large battle scenes, though they are not merely spectacle but an integral part of the entire effect, are almost breath-taking in their detail and technical mastery of a distinct art. This year, as Hollywood's press agents have more than informed us, the talking picture is celebrating its twentieth year. *Henry V* makes one feel that it has come of age a whole year before it is assumed that the human animal does so. In addition to the Messrs. Olivier and Banks, the cast of the film includes Robert Newton as Pistol, Renee Asherson as the Princess Katherine, Esmond Knight as Fluellen, Felix Aylmer as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Leo Genn as the Constable of France, Nicholas Hannen as the Duke of Exeter, Harcourt Williams as King Charles VI of France, Ivy St. Helier as Alice, Ernest Thesiger as the Duke of Berri, Russell Thorndike as the Duke of Bourbon, Michael Ward as the Duke of Gloucester, George Robet as Sir John Falstaff. All of these people are personages of the first importance in the English theatre. It is unlikely that ever before so genuinely an impressive aggregation of actors has been assembled for a film. William Walton composed an original score, which is played by Muir Matheson and the London Symphony Orchestra. It is too rare an occasion that I can feel that all of the readers of this page can share in the pleasure and artistry of a production which I describe. *Henry V* has, or will soon be playing in most communities, and it is hoped that everyone will grasp a most unusual opportunity.

Repertory

Repertory or some form of permanent organization seems to be the keynote of a great part of the new season's activity. The American Repertory Theatre, headed by Cheryl Crawford, Eve Le Gallienne and Margaret Webster, has announced a most promising schedule (including productions of Shakespeare's *King Henry*



A scene from The Spur production of Clifford Odets' *Awake and Sing*. Albert Leberfeld as Jacob urges his grandson, Ralph (Carmen Capalbo) to wrest himself from the morass which has ensnared the Berger family. Setting by Melvin Bourne.

VIII and J. M. Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows*), and has even amassed a sizeable subscription audience. Other organizations, too, have projected similar plans and during the summer a most interesting venture flourished in Greenwich Village at the Cherry Lane Theatre. A group of theatre enthusiasts, many of them graduates or students of the Drama School of Yale University, formed together a company under the title of The Spur and, before the end of the summer, will have presented four productions. Opening with Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*, the group next focused its attention upon Clifford Odets drama of modern frustration, *Awake and Sing*. This is one of the genre pieces upon which the now defunct, but once tremendously vital, Group Theatre lavished one of its finest displays of talents. In the original production, done in New York during the winter of 1935, Stella and Luther Adler, Morris Carnovsky, J. Edward Bromberg, Jules (later John) Garfield brought to life with amazing force and clarity the Bergers of the Bronx and all of their travail and frustration. It was feared, that the play needed to be done by such a company—a company which had in its tradition and heritage much that was of a piece with the heritage of the Bergers. In the recent production, the young people of The Spur brought forth as forceful and as true a representation of Odets people.

Directed by Leo Lieberman, one of The Spur's founding members, the cast included: Gene Brennan and Nancy Wickwire as Myron and Bessie Berger, Carmen Capalbo as Ralph Berger, Louise Develin as Hennie Berger, Albert Leberfeld as old Jacob, Emanuel Brookman as Uncle Morty, Albert Morgestern as Moe Axelrod, Andrew Dennis as Sam Feinschreiber and Stephen Porter as Schlosser. An excellent setting was designed by Melvin Bourne; the costumes were by Sonia Albert and Joan Feldman.

The next, and third, production did not come off as fortunately. It was Barrie's

Dear Brutus, admittedly a very difficult play to capture. Somehow, the actors and the director, Mr. Leberfeld, were not able to incorporate into the production the rather shimmering, other-than-this-world quality which *Dear Brutus* must have. It will be most interesting to see how well they are able to master Paul Vincent Carroll's *Shadow and Substance*, which is to be their next program. Much of the fantasy of the Barrie play is used in Mr. Carroll's story of the simple, believing servant girl and the formal, prosaic Canon of the Church. Whatever the result, it is encouraging to see a group with the enthusiasm and the artistry of The Spur setting up an organization and bringing into the theatre a spirit and a determination that has been too long and too noticeably lacking.

One wishes for greater space to tell of Orsen Welles' extravaganza, *Around the World*, in which this ever unpredictable individual explored what (for him) was an entirely novel form of the theatre. Re-telling the story of Phileas Fogg and his epochal trip around the world in eighty days, Mr. Welles as director and actor filled his stage with all manner of tricks and people from the worlds of the theatre, the film and the circus. Maurice Evans' return to New York's City Center of Music and Drama in his G. I. version of *Hamlet* was an eagerly awaited, though disappointing, event of the late spring. The production had suffered through its tour, and too many of the cast showed lack of enthusiasm and a slipping into humdrum routine.

One is forced, however, to look ahead to the new season. A season which, it is hoped, will have many of the plans formulated for a betterment of the theatre. With the formation of the American National Theatre and Academy, the United States has set out toward the establishment of the long projected national theatre. Much of what happens this season will determine the future of this important step and will shape the form and growth of the theatre of the entire world.

The Play of the Month

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Director of Dramatics, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky

This department is designed to assist directors, teachers and students choose, cast and produce plays of recognized merit. Suggestions concerning plays which readers should like to see discussed here will be welcomed by the Department Editor.

Staging *Ramshackle Inn*

By MISS ELEANOR McCUE

Lewiston High School, Lewiston, Maine

Ramshackle Inn, a murder-mystery thriller in 3 acts, 1 interior, modern costumes. Nine men, six women, recently played with success in New York with Zasu Pitts in leading role. Royalty, \$35.00. Dramatists Play Service, New York.

Suitability

OUR production of the play, *Junior Miss*, had been so successful, that I worried about what to do next. I felt that any available domestic comedy would seem flat. So I looked around for something so different that comparison would be difficult. The answer seemed to be *Ramshackle Inn*. It is a fast, cock-eyed, really funny murder mystery thriller, which can be played to the hilt with all the exuberance of which the high school seniors are so abundantly endowed. Although gangsters, murders, corpses, etc., abound, there is nothing morbid about it. It is all in the spirit of fun. (The fun the cast got out of the dummy corpse alone would suffice to make rehearsals memorable.)

Although *Ramshackle Inn* deals with "tough" characters, it is an exceptionally clean written play. There is, surprisingly, no profanity to be deleted. If you cut three or four of Mame's short unimportant speeches which indicate that she drinks, there is no more changing to be done.

The situations and lines are both funny and expertly built. The characters are sharply drawn. There is something fast, mad, and young about the play.

Plot

Miss Belinda Pryde, an old maid librarian, has saved her money for twenty years "in nickels and dimes" in order to buy a hotel. Her ideas of a hotel are modelled on her favorite novel, *Grand Hotel*, and it is *Grand Hotel* she is expecting when she arrives to take over *Ye Olde Colonial Inne*. She also hopes to meet interesting people, because "she just loves people." What she gets is a strange, gloomy, tumbledown place near the ocean—but she does meet "interesting people," mostly not the kind she could love, however. She takes possession on a wild, stormy night when the activities of a gang of racketeers, who have the hotel as their headquarters, reach a climax. She imperturbably encounters murderers, secret trunks, corpses; wanders through mysterious situations; meets comedy and drama; finally solves the mystery, and practically single-handed disposes of one villain after another, until the final act discloses almost as many villains laid low and scattered about the stage as a Shakespearean tragedy. Only it is hilariously funny and actors and audience alike love it.

Casting

You must have three strong players, two girls and a boy. The other characters

Eleanor L. McCue

MISS McCUE, a graduate of Bates College, has a Master's degree from the University of Maine. She is the dramatic director in the high school at Lewiston, Maine, and is on the board of directors of the Lewiston-Auburn Community Theatre. She is in charge of play selection, casting and direction of the three-act plays. She directs one long play for this group and appoints and supervises the directors of the other long plays.

are of only ordinary difficulty. Of course, the role, Belinda Pryde, carries the play. She needn't be the Zasu Pitts type—my Belinda was dark and vivacious—but she must be a natural comedienne, and she must be able to learn around 450 speeches.

Mame, the original hotel owner, must give an impression of toughness and maturity, and Patton, the villain, has a long sustaining role, much more important than it seems when you first read the play. The right boy in this role has a very steady effect on the cast.

It adds to the comedy effect to have Constable Small tall and his assistant Gilhooley short. If necessary, Arbuthnot and Porter could be played by the same boy, as Arbuthnot is murdered in Act I, and Porter has but one scene at the end of Act III.

The Commodore's lines seem to ring truer if the boy playing the part is robust, although it isn't really necessary. As between the boy with the right physical build, and the boy with a sense of comedy, I chose the latter. Alice Fisher is supposed to be the kidnapped girl friend of a racketeer. I had a very talented girl who was too small and childlike looking for any of the parts, so I changed three words and made her the racketeer's daughter. A boy, too stiff appearing for many roles, made a convincing banker.

Staging

This play is not difficult to stage because one can omit the elaborate balcony with the doors into the bedrooms which the script calls for. It could really be played on one level, but I compromised with an easily-built half balcony.

A flight of steps about three feet high, ran up to a platform large enough to hold three people, and this balcony ran off back of the flat, giving the impression that the rooms were a bit farther along the balcony. This was simple to erect and gave the pictorial advantage of playing at different levels, balcony level, or level of any of the steps. The hotel desk and safe were made of wall board, the safe back-

ing into a fireplace opening in the back flat, so the boy put into it could get out. Our flats didn't have the five doors called for, so we used our three doors for the ones which really had to be shut, the outer door, Belinda's room and the closet. For the cellar we slid one flat behind another, and for the dining room, we just left a space between the downstage right flat and the curtain, very unprofessional, but we wanted to do the play badly enough not to care.

Sound Effects, Rain, Properties

We purchased the four records listed in the play book, and augmented the storm by using a regular wind machine and pouring split peas back and forth from one tin pan to another for rain, when the door opened. The records were for the back ground storm. A girl in charge of a large water pail saw to it that oilskins, hair, and umbrellas were realistically wet.

The properties are few and simple, if one does not have difficulty getting enough revolvers. Although various shots are fired presumably by different people, two are off stage, and the others are in a black-out, so it is necessary to have only one revolver that really works. It is filled with blanks, given either to Patton or Dr. Russell, whoever is most responsible.

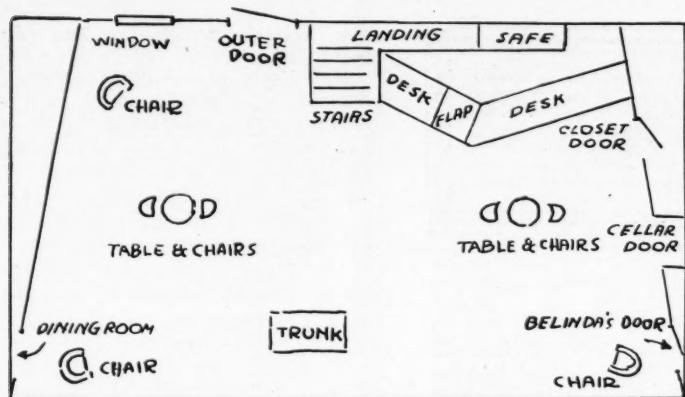
We practiced with hand cuffs from the very first, and never had any trouble getting them on in the dark or getting them off. Trouble could develop, however, if the students were not thoroughly used to them.

The dummy corpse was made hilariously funny by stuffing a set of long underwear, wiring it slightly, attaching stuffed gloves for the hands, and stuffing and shaping a good sized lisle stocking for the head. It is, of course, finally dressed in the clothes worn by Arbuthnot, when murdered. Our Arbuthnot, fortunately, wasn't very big, which made easier to put him in the safe, and the dummy easier to handle. With a little practice the dummy can be handled so as to prevent him from seeming too unreal. We all became very fond of the "Boy Friend" who looked gruesomely real. One of my difficulties was in forestalling the understandable and almost irresistible temptation of the students to leave him in various strategic and effective places throughout the school, such as slumped suicidally over the desk in some teacher's room.

Costumes—Make-up

The costumes and make-up are too easy to need any detail. The only one who seemed to need any particular thought was Belinda. Our first few attempts both with hair-do and costume made her look too funny. She was really a pretty girl, and I wanted her to look pretty, though in a quaint, only slightly amusing, believable way. She finally wore her hair straight back from the face, with a big bun held in place with a net, low on her neck.

For a costume, a teacher loaned us a



Floor Plan for Ramshackle Inn as staged at the Lewiston, Maine, High School.

brown skirt and a brown and white checked jacket, of good material and well tailored but about ten years old. That meant that the shoulders of the jacket were definitely *not* smart, the flare of the skirt, slightly wrong. She wore with this an over frilly white blouse, just a bit wrong for style with the suit, but framing her face becomingly and drawing the eyes to her, in spite of the sober hue of the skirt and jacket. The clothes fitted well, the skirt purposely just a bit too long. She carried a cloth bag with a long draw-string, and was never without it.

The local police department lent us a supply of oilskins, which we used for as many characters as possible, as water shows up so well on them.

Errors in Script

The script of *Ramshackle Inn* is faulty in two annoying ways. Arbuthnot is murdered behind the desk, then, Patton, the murderer, gets a laundry bag, and goes down cellar with it, leaving the corpse behind the desk. No stage direction mentions disposing of the corpse. Yet one gathers that it is in the safe, where accordingly Patton has to be allowed a little extra time to put it.

More annoying than this are the stage directions. I am one of those directors who follow carefully the blocking in the book, believing that the professional director who originally blocked it, is much better at it than I. But in the first edition of *Ramshackle Inn*, the stage diagram and the stage directions are at variance. I hope I can save some other directors much time I lost, by setting the stage according to the diagram and then trying to follow the stage directions. The diagram calls for a table and two chairs, center stage, an arm chair at each end of the stage, with the trunk not shown, but presumably in front of the center table, either slightly to the right or left. But the stage directions cannot be followed. They come out exasperatingly wrong, until one discovers that they are written for a stage set with *no* center table, but a small table with a chair on either side, right center, and another small table with chair on either side, left center. The trunk is dead center. We set the stage that way and the directions were all good. See diagram above.

Lighting

We used two practical bracket lamps, one on the right wall, and one on the wall left center back of the desk. As the action is all at night these were always on except in the blackouts. We crayoned an imitation switch, a black oblong with a white center, on the wall just at the right of center door. This was not only a natural location, it also was effective for action, and could be seen from prompter and switchboard positions.

We used four circuits, two borders, and two foots with amber predominating, and with about half the whites screwed out. During all the business with the dummy in Act II, we used one circuit of amber borders to approximate candlelight. Patton must light the candles *first* with lights full on, *then* turn the switch, and everything except one amber circuit can go off together, leaving candlelight.

Since we had no dimmers, the blackout presented a problem. We were using five circuits: two borders, two foots, and the one the wall lights were plugged into. Obviously, one couldn't snap the five separately and get an effective blackout. These switches happened to be two on one side of the small switch box, three on the other. We placed one short wooden stick back of the three, another back of the two. Using both hands, one boy pulled the three, another the two, simultaneously.

Publicity

Publicity presents few problems to us, as we fill the hall two nights anyway, and don't think it is good for either the cast or the school to play it a third. We have publicity in the three local dailies. We use short plugs on the Lewiston Radio Station, WCOU; reminders on the school radio system, and posters in the stores. A local photographer has been interested enough to take studio portraits, make enlargements, and make large standing posters which are seen in Boston or New York theater lobbies, at no charge.

Budget

Royalty: \$35 first night, \$25 second night.	\$ 60.00
Play Books (12).....	9.00
Advertising (Radio and Paid Ads).....	25.00
Tickets—Programs	14.95
Construction	8.00
Make-up	3.00
	\$119.95

These expenses are for the two nights.

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Mention DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

Drama for Children

By LOUISE C. HORTON

Drama Department, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minn.

This Department has for its purpose the advancement of the Children's Theatre Movement in America. Directors and teachers are urged to report to Miss Horton, for publication in this Department, news of their productions and other significant projects.

Report of the Children's Theatre Conference

Held at Seattle, Washington, August 2-5

IN the young part of the country, the far northwest, where there is youthful spontaneity and vitality in the life about you, and on the University of Washington campus, Seattle, in the midst of healthy, vigorous theatre activity, was held the first national Children's Theatre Conference under the banner of the American Educational Theatre Association.

With the speech of Mrs. Charlotte Chorpénning in the opening symposium, the Conference was given a direction which it unfortunately failed to take, mainly because the idea was so big, and those attending the Conference were too close to it. By the time its full significance had really penetrated, bags were packed and delegates were homeward-bound, train-waiting at the station.

"For every two steps forward, children's theatre takes one step backward," Mrs. Chorpénning said, pointing up her remark with vivid illustration after illustration showing the value of theatre magic in the present and future life of the child.

"A children's theatre must develop consciousness of beauty. It must create experience useful to personal growth." In Mrs. Chorpénning's talk this idea grew until the all-encompassing panorama of children's theatre spread out before one like a view of the western plains. Mrs. Chorpénning is a leader who sees children's theatre as perhaps no one else quite manages to see it. Children's theatre has infinite implications, possibilities, significances, and she sees them all with a sympathetic understanding of their true worth, tolerant but also implacable where anything destructive to children's theatre ideal is concerned.

It was with understanding and vision that Mrs. Chorpénning gave the warning: "For every two steps forward, children's theatre takes one step backward."

Winifred Ward, as second speaker on the symposium, had the subject, "Planning a Year's Program." In the audience were many new to children's theatre, vitally interested but still feeling their way. To them, as well as to those who after many years of programming want a little variety, Miss Ward's talk was of great value. In giving ideas for a year's program, Miss Ward, as a children's theatre authority, gives much more than a mere list of plays. Her talk might have been called "Evaluating Plays for Children," for she sprinkled her remarks with hints of what to look for and what to do with them after the plays had been found.

A most important phase of children's theatre, the technical one, was handled in an excellent talk, "Interpretation Through Design," by Roy Morgan, stage technician and pioneer in children's films at Palo Alto, California.

The technical production in children's theatre, as in adult theatre, is of great importance. It can make a poor play or break a good one. The tragedy is that so few people in any audience can separate the production from the play and determine correctly their relative values. Too often, as Mr. Morgan pointed out, the production dominates and obscures the play's true worth or lack of it. He explained how the technical end of production should give the play a background, and help to underline and emphasize the crises and climaxes.

Later in the Conference, Mr. Morgan led an interesting panel discussion on the practical approach to various play production techniques.

The subject, "Interpretation Through Directing and Acting," was in the capable hands of Hazel Glaister Robertson, director of the Children's Theatre, Palo Alto, California.

Mrs. Robertson talks solid theatre, something that, strange as it may seem, you hear surprisingly little of in children's theatre. Following Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Robertson completed the picture of what makes excellent theatre, and thus completed the aim of the symposium: to give at the very beginning, an over-all picture of the field.

AT present one of the leading aims of children's theatre is to attract into the field playwrights of distinction and new playwrights of promise. A wonderful opportunity to attempt this by direct contact was provided by the presence on the University of Washington campus of the Pacific Northwest Writers' Conference.

The evening of the first day was devoted to a panel discussion on both stage and radio plays for children. Anyone intrigued by the possibilities therein had a wealth of first-hand information tossed into his lap.

The publisher's point-of-view was represented by Sara Spencer Campbell, editor of *Children's Theatre Press*. Mrs. Robertson again brought her thorough theatre background to add to the discussion. The playwrights themselves, led by Mrs. Chorpénning, included Nora Tully Macalvay, co-author with Mrs. Chorpénning of *The*

Elves and the Shoemaker, and Martha King, author of *Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater*. Radio playwriting was discussed by Gloria Chandler, consultant on radio for the Association of Junior Leagues, and Helen Platt, script writer from Portland, Oregon.

A chance to see the actual production of two plays for children was provided by the University of Washington.

Once Upon a Clothesline, by Aurand Harris, a prize winner in the Seattle Junior Programs, Inc. Playwriting Contest, was given a stunning production by the Seattle Repertory Theatre, under the direction of Bette Anderson. The remarkable thing about this event was that, in the most effective manner yet, it threw the spotlight on one of the keenest needs of children's theatre—the good children's play.

The most practical job in the country for fulfilling this need is being done by Seattle Junior Programs, Inc., with their yearly contest for children's plays.

A practical example of real live theatre for children was the Showboat Theatre's colorful presentation of *Rip Van Winkle*, by Grace Dorcas Ruthenburg, directed by Barbara Foley.

Expert and highly satisfying discussion followed both these plays.

THOSE attending the Conference were privileged to witness a showing of *Titian*, the Palo Alto pioneer experiment in children's films, and to hear an analysis of it by Hazel Glaister Robertson, the force behind the experiment. Palo Alto will continue through the coming season its fine and much-needed work in a field rich in promise.

Radio for children was also expertly analyzed by Gloria Chandler, Helen Platt, Mrs. B. M. Blackburn, William Ladd, and Margaret Barry.

The Puppetry session was a combination of discussion and demonstration. Held appropriately in the Puppetry Laboratory of the University of Washington, the meeting was one of color and atmosphere.

Under the direction of Miss Juliette Gualteri, the children from Summit School Play Center, Seattle, presented their version of *The Selfish Giant*. The stick puppets and the scenery were hand-made by the children.

Edith and Robert Williams, creators of the Williams Marionettes, are firm believers in creating beauty and substance along with the entertainment in a show. They presented the first scene from *Young Leo and the Hunter*, an original adaptation from the Arabian Nights.

Mrs. Marion Robb Devine, former director of the Sue Hastings Marionettes, Seattle, discussed in a practical manner, "Script Writing for Puppetry."

Hand Puppets were demonstrated by Lorraine Clausen and Dwight Pinkerton.

Miss Azella Taylor presented practical suggestions for the use and the making of puppets and marionettes.

The meeting on creative dramatics, al-

ways a provocative subject, was another one of discussion and demonstration. In preparing the audience for the demonstration, Miss Winifred Ward defined creative dramatics as "an inclusive term referring to all forms of drama which are improvised. It is spontaneous and requires the players to be alert and to think on their feet. In creative dramatics the children are guided but not directed. This form of drama is not suitable for formal audiences."

The demonstration followed, given by a group of Seattle elementary school children. They first presented *The Emperor's New Clothes*, which they had prepared the previous week. Then they illustrated the manner in which a play is prepared. The director chose *The Three Wishes*. The children told the story, divided it into scenes, decided on the cast and presented the first scene. After constructive criticism, another cast gave its interpretation of the same scene.

Following the demonstration, there was an analysis of the work, led by Miss Ward.

Granting that a public demonstration of creative dramatics defeats its own purpose, it is often the only way to point out specifically how children are guided in this work, not directed. Surely the intelligent, far-seeing potential leader in this field can sense the effect of an audience on the children performing and realize how the one defeats the other.

Although one frequently finds creative dramatics a highly debatable subject, actually there is no reason why it should be so. It is recognized by experts everywhere as excellent in itself for beginners and later as a preparation for formal acting technique. Miss Ward herself points this out again and again. In her thinking there is no confusion. The confusion lies in the thinking of too many of her imitators. I use the word "imitators" in contrast to those who are doing their best to nourish through creative dramatics the growth of potentially fine theatre.

THE session on "Children's Theatre and the High School" tackled the highly interesting problem: What can we do to encourage high schools to do plays for children?

Hazel Robertson, Nora Tully Macalvay, Ivard Strauss, and Mrs. John P. Patten contributed to the worthwhile discussion, led by Burdette Fitzgerald of East Bay Children's Theatre, Oakland, California.

A whole column could be devoted to this question—and will be later in the year.

The same is true of that field of endless opportunity, "Children's Theatre and the College." This discussion was led by Barnard Hewitt, Brooklyn College, New York City, and included Dr. C. Lowell Lees, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; Frank Whiting, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; Ann Matlack, University of Denver, and Barbara Foley, University of Washington, Seattle.

All the practical problems involved in



Student actor in the film, *Titian*, a children's film produced at Palo Alto, California, under the direction of Hazel Glaister Robertson.

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Trouping Children's Theatre were also discussed in a special meeting, led by Gloria Chandler of New York City. This also is too big a subject to be covered hurriedly. An outstanding trouping children's theatre will be featured in this department in the near future.

Community Organization and other problems of the centralized children's theatre were taken up in two different panel discussions: one led by Mrs. George C. Nickum of the Seattle Junior League and the Junior Programs; and the other by Sarah Spencer Campbell, Editor of *Children's Theatre Press*.

Guest speaker at the Conference was

Awards

Dramatists' Alliance of Stanford University, an association formed to encourage young playwrights, has announced the prize-winning plays from its eleventh annual series of competitions. From the scores of entries coming from all sections of the United States and Canada the judges have selected the following winners: Hermine Duthie of Portland, Oregon, wins the Miles Anderson Award for drama on American life with her play, *The Festered Lily*, a three-act domestic drama showing the defeat of the puritanical matriarch by the combined forces of older and younger generations in the household. The play will be presented as the opening of the fall season by the Peninsula Little Theatre of San Mateo, the organization sponsoring the Miles Anderson Award. The Stephen Vincent Benet Award for radio plays is awarded to Malvin Wald of Beverly Hills, California, for *As Sound As a Bell*, a development of the guilt motif in a murderer haunted by a sound associated with his crime. The Henry David Gray Award for dramatic criticism goes to Elizabeth McCoy of Dayton, Ohio, for her vigorous and timely article demanding standard criticism for radio—"Wanted: Voices in the Wilderness."

George Freedley, author and critic, and curator, Theatre Collection, New York Public Library. Mr. Freedley threw out a few pertinent remarks that provoked great discussion.

Besides speaking of the possibilities of children's theatre's connection with ANTA (American National Theatre and Academy), he also said: "Those concerned in children's theatre are the ones that will determine the future of the theatre."

And he bid all directors, actors, playwrights: "think of your relationship to the theatre as a whole, not just to one narrow phase of it."

He asked the question: "Are you sure your playwrights understand the audiences for which they write?" a question which completed the circle back to the problem brought up so early in the Conference—the need for the good children's play.

FOR a number of years children's theatre has been struggling and reaching for national organization and recognition, and through the confusion of many voices, each crying aloud its own importance, the real thing has striven to make itself heard.

The real thing is the creation of live and vigorous theatre for live and vigorous minds. As simple as that. But you would never suspect it of simplicity as you listen to the hodge-podge of argument on adult cast versus child cast, creative dramatics versus formal acting technique, public try-outs versus the selected cast, the intermission problem, the audience problem, the colossal waste of time. The few important contributions to the Conference nearly missed fire in the confusion.

Let it be known that the Children's Theatre Committee has its eyes wide open and is perfectly aware of everything that is going on. No one sees it more whole than the Committee, which is striving to guide the steps of this unruly child, Children's Theatre, the one theatre movement the least appreciated, yet promising the most, for in the children it is dealing with the future in the present.

ALREADY plans are taking shape for the second national Children's Theatre Conference at Indiana University, in June, 1947. The outstanding trend of these plans is the consolidation of all those minor argumentative problems. True, all these problems must be answered. Director, technician, teacher attend a conference to find the answers.

On the other hand, there is the tremendous over-all issue of children's theatre itself, its far-reaching significance as a social force as well as an artistic achievement. A national conference is the best chance to make the leaders in children's theatre conscious of its big meaning, its wide range. Each future conference must move nearer tolerance and understanding, so that all loose ends may be pulled together for a common purpose, to the end that there may be no more "steps backward."

(Miss Horton's department will appear next in our December issue.—Editor)

The Aftermath^{*}

A Drama in One Act

By WALTER H. TRUMBAUER

Director, Department of Drama, Alabama College, Montevallo, Alabama

CHARACTERS: Albert Guilmont; Julie, his wife; Henry Jardin, an American; Yvette, a neighbor.

PLACE: La Ferté Bernard, France.

TIME: November, 1945.

Scene: Livingroom of a French cottage. On the Right, as we look at the room, is an open hearth, with a clock above, and a cobbler's work-bench before it. At the back, Right, is a small window, and at Left, is a door to the street. A door, Right rear, leads to the bedrooms; another, Left rear, leads to the kitchen. At the Left Centre of the room is a table fully set for supper, for three. The furnishings are plain, but the room has a festive appearance.

At the rise of the curtain: Julie, aged fifty, moving about, left of table, and Albert, aged fifty-five, seated before the hearth repairing shoes. He is crippled with rheumatism. The Marseillaise is heard in the distance.

Julie: Hark! (Going to the window.) Some more must be coming in.

Albert: (Pausing in his work): How good it sounds.

Julie: Peace! It means peace! (Turning to the picture of the Virgin.) Thank Thee, Oh, Blessed Mother!

Albert: We paid dearly to hear it triumphant again.

Julie: Albert, I believe you're sad . . . and on a day like this.

Albert: I know I shouldn't be, Julie. (Trying to be cheerful.) . . . especially today.

Julie: Today your heart should be full of joy and hope. Today, Albert, we begin to live again.

Albert: Ma chérie, you may be deceiving yourself. How do you know that . . . Georges . . . will come . . . today?

Julie: Do you think he would not come just as soon as he is discharged from the hospital? My boy would not do that.

Albert: Yes, yes, but he hasn't told you he was coming.

Julie: Tell me! Does my boy need to tell me he is coming home? Oh, Albert!

Albert: But a man in the army is not his

own master. I know. He may have had to . . . (Looking out the window.) I can see only to the Rochelle Road now, it's getting so dark. I'll try from the other window.

Exit Right. Pause. Knock. Albert looks anxiously to the right, then opens the door, rear.)

Albert: Come in.

Yvette: Good evening, neighbor. Oh, how pretty it all is!

Albert: Good evening, child. It's been many weeks since you were here.

Yvette: Yes, I hope your rheumatism is less troublesome.

Albert: It's improving slowly. It's like all the rest of our afflictions, it improves slowly.

Yvette: Oh, Monsieur, you are melancholy. I understand, Monsieur. Henri is coming from the hospital.

Albert: Henri!

Yvette: I mean . . . her Georges.

Albert: Her Georges!

Yvette: Mother sent me over to see if I could help Madame in any way.

Albert: Come here, child. (She sits near him. He glances anxiously off right.) You're very kind, Yvette, but Julie will not want you to help her.

Yvette: Not . . . ?

Albert: No, she'll not want you even to stay here.

Yvette: But . . .

Albert: Hush, child. I want you to stay. We need you tonight . . . really.

Yvette: I don't understand.

Albert: How should you? How should you, my child? Julie insists on doing everything for this . . . Georges . . . with her own hands. To her even the touch of strangers contaminates.

Yvette (Flaring up.): But I am not a stranger. My touch doesn't contaminate any more than hers does.

Albert: Of course not, my child. I know how you feel.

Yvette: But Monsieur, how can you?

Albert: I am an old man. I was young once though. I know how you feel. But you must conceal your feelings.

Yvette: Conceal them?

Albert: Yes, Julie is jealous.

Yvette: Jealous of me? Of me?

Albert: Of everyone. You must not cross her. You must pretend . . . as I do.

Yvette: Must you pretend?

Albert: Yes, for her sake. Do you think it makes me happy that she mistakes this stranger, this foreigner, for our own boy? No, no it hurts. It's hard to take in this Georges when our own poor Georges is far, far away . . . God alone knows where.

Yvette: It's strange she can't realize that Georges was killed.

Albert: His body was never found, you know.

Yvette: It's strange how the idea has possessed her. The resemblance is only superficial.

Albert: Not entirely. For days I was not sure myself; he was unconscious for so long.

Yvette: I thought though . . . that . . . time . . .

Albert: Time has only strengthened her conviction. It will take more than time to change her. That's why I fear . . .

Yvette: It's made her very happy.

Albert: He's been a Godsend. Just as she was about to give up hope, she found this boy. It was as though the Blessed Virgin has at last heard and answered her prayers.

(Suddenly aware of Julie's approach.)

You won't go, Yvette . . . even though she speaks sharply?

Yvette: No, Monsieur.

(Enter Julie.)

Good evening, Madame.

Julie: Good evening.

Yvette: Mother sent me to see if . . .

Julie: Mother?

Yvette: . . . I could help you in any way. Julie: Thank you. I can get along very well. Your mother usually comes herself.

Yvette: She isn't feeling well today.

Julie: Then you had better not leave her.

Albert: Is there any sign of him, Julie?

Julie: Not yet.

Albert: Perhaps he wasn't well enough to be dismissed. It's getting late. Hadn't we better eat supper?

Julie: Albert, how can you say such a thing? Eat without him? What will he think? How will he feel that we did not care enough . . .

Albert: It's for your own sake, ma chérie, that I urge it. You've eaten scarcely anything all day. At least you should rest.

Julie (Nervously goes to the window.): There will be plenty of time to rest. Georges doesn't return home everyday in the year. (Suddenly, after looking at the clock.) Perhaps though, while I have been staring out of the windows everything has burnt up. (She goes to the kitchen hurriedly.)

Yvette: Monsieur, has Henri told you his plans?

Albert: No, I know nothing. That's why I dread his . . .

Yvette: I know them.

Albert: He's told you?

Yvette: He's not leaving the hospital until tomorrow. I'm to meet him at the gate.

Albert: Then he isn't coming here tonight?

Yvette: Yes, he is . . . to say goodbye.

Albert: Oh, my child, what can we do?

Yvette: You must tell her, Monsieur.

Albert: Where does he go tomorrow?

Yvette: To join an American company at Rouen.

Albert: Perhaps we can find a way.

Yvette: We must tell her he is Henri . . . Not Georges. It isn't fair.

Albert: Fair? (With great pain.) No, it isn't fair. (Yvette defiantly runs into the bedroom.) Yvette, Yvette, come out! Julie will . . .

Julie (In the kitchen.): What's that you are saying?

Albert: Oh, well . . .

Julie (Entering.): What's that you are saying?

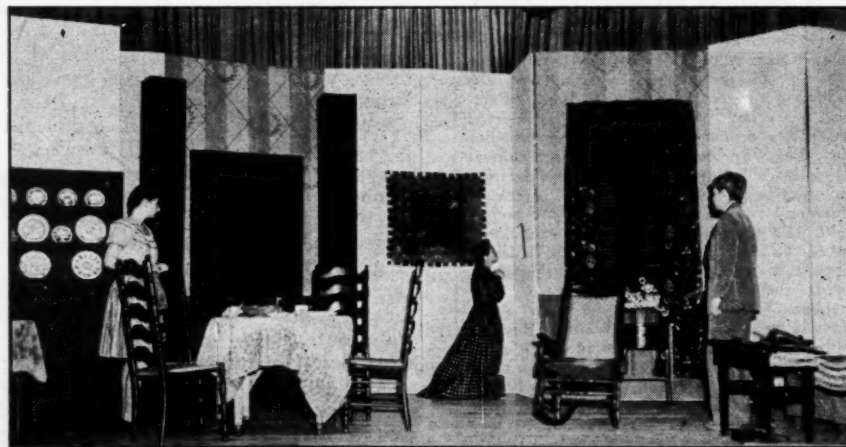
Albert: I was just saying how much we have to be thankful for.

Yvette (Running in.): Now Madame may be jealous . . .

Julie: What? You've been in there?

Yvette: I didn't contaminate. . . .

Julie: How could you? Oh, Albert, you let her?



Scene from a production of *The Aftermath* given at the Alabama College under the author's direction.

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Albert: The child's done no harm.
Julie (*Going to the window again.*): He may have lost his way in the dark and cold.
Albert: Never mind, Julie. If he doesn't come now, he'll come later; perhaps when you are least expecting him.
Yvette: I'm sure he will come.
Julie: Yvette, look at me. How do you know that?
Yvette (*Noting a sign from Albert.*): I feel sure he will.
Julie: Yes, I felt it too, but now I'm not so sure. Do you think he'll come tonight?
Yvette (*Deliberately.*): He said he would.
Julie: He told you?
Yvette: Yes.
Julie: When?
Yvette: The other day.
Julie: You've been seeing him?
Yvette: Of course. He needs friends.
Julie (*Pained, she sits.*): Yes, yes. (*She looks at the clock.*) Something must have happened. He'd been here before this.
Albert: The army does things slowly, you know.
Yvette: Perhaps he stopped somewhere.
Julie: Home was the first place Georges ever thought of. (*Looking resentfully at Yvette.*) Some girls may have taken him somewhere. They are so frivolous. Oh, Albert, I have a feeling now . . . I cannot tell . . . somehow . . . I feel that something is wrong. I felt so before, when . . . he lay wounded on the . . . (*Before the picture of the Virgin.*)
Holy Mother, has my boy been hurt? . . . or met with misfortune? Has he fallen into evil ways in spite of all my warnings?
Albert: Ma chérie, the long wait has upset you. A bit of something to eat or drink will calm you.
Julie (*Kneeling.*): Blessed Mother, you have always been good to me. Do not desert me now. (*She prays inaudibly.*)
Albert: Julie, you have braved many disappointments. Don't give up for this one.

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Yvette: Some wine, Madame, perhaps?
(*She pours. There is a knock. They stand transfixed for a moment.*)

Julie: It's he! It's he!
(*Yvette opens the door. Julie rushes to Henri.*)

Henri: Hello!
Julie: Georges, Georges, my Georges!
(*She kisses him profusely, then faints on his shoulder.*)

Henri: Quick, a chair. She's fainted.
(*They bring her down to a chair.*)

Albert: Yvette, the vinegar.
(*Yvette gets cruel, and wipes Julie's face with the vinegar. Henri removes pack, shakes hands with Albert, then turns to Yvette.*)

Henri: I stopped at your place as I passed.
Albert: Tst!

Henri: How?
Albert: Not before Julie.
(*Julie revives.*)

Henri: Are you better?
(*They give her the wine.*)

Albert: The long wait's been too much for her. Since four o'clock we've been expecting you. You are very late, my boy.

Henri: My papers were late in coming through, and then the roads weren't marked.

Julie (*Whose eyes have been fastened on Henri, rising.*): Let me hold you my Georges. It's been so long since I held you in my arms. It's good to have you back again. (*Kisses him.*)

Henri: And I'm very glad to be with you.
Julie: You still have your coat on. Come, your room is all ready. I've kept it just as you like it.

Henri: My room?
Albert: Yes, yes, Georges. She's kept it ready for you.

Henri: How good of you. But . . . you know . . . I'm sorry that . . .

Albert: Go and see it. (*Julie takes up the pack.*)

Henri: Let that stay. I don't need it.
Julie: But you will want it in your room.

Henri: No, no . . . not . . . I brought it along because I have some mementoes in it.
Julie: But tomorrow . . .

Albert: Take it Georges, if she wishes it.
Henri: Oh, certainly.

(Both go into bedrooms.)

Yvette: Doesn't he look well?

Albert: Very well.

Yvette: And he's in better spirits than I've ever seen him.

Albert: Well, why shouldn't he be? Why shouldn't he be glad to get back to peace and life . . . especially when he's won? I was glad in '19, even though we had no home to come to. It's hard out there.

Julie (Entering): Now Albert, we'll have supper right away. The poor boy must be nearly starved.

Albert: And so are we.

(Julie goes into kitchen.)

Yvette: I don't understand, Monsieur.

Albert: What?

Yvette: Why she can't see the difference between them.

Albert: I don't know I wish she could, but I'm afraid if . . .

(Enter Henri without coat.)

Henri: It is pretty. How much a few ribbons and greens enliven things. And the flowers! Where did she get them at this time of year?

Albert: She's been growing them at the south window.

Henri: And the bed! How I should love to sleep in such a roomy bed. That's a pleasure though. I won't have for some time yet.

Albert: You see how much it all means to her.

Yvette: We're all proud of you Henri.

Albert: Georges!

Yvette: Georges.

Albert: France will ever be grateful to you and your American conferees. We would have perished without you.

Henri: Hardly Monsieur, but we were glad to help.

Yvette: Weren't you terrified when they shot you down?

Henri: Well, . . . the first time it made chills run up and down my spine; the second time, I didn't know anything about it.

Albert: Yes, the burns must have been . . . very . . . painful.

Yvette: Is your shoulder completely well?

Henri: Almost.

Yvette: You certainly look the picture of health.

Henri (Bowing): Merci.

(Julie stops momentarily at the door as she sees this; then she places dishes on the table.)

Yvette: Doesn't he look well, Madame?

Julie (Slowly): You've hardly changed at all.

Henri (Facetiously looking at his nondescript outfit.): Only the uniform.

Albert: It has seen better days.

Julie: How splendid you looked in your first uniform. Many a time I've been sorry we did not get a picture of you then.

Albert: If he only hadn't had to go away so quickly. It would have been a great comfort to us.

Julie: It isn't too late though . . . now that you're home again.

Henri: I'll be getting a new one tomorrow.

Yvette: Splendid.

Julie: Often though, when you were far away, I knew not where, I found consolation in this. (She kisses the locket.) I had only to look upon the picture to feel that you were with me. Many a time I've thanked the Holy Mother for that little comfort. Now I thank her that I have you instead. But I'm forgetting the supper.

(As she is about to enter the kitchen she stops, her jealousy surging up.)

Yvette, if you really wish to help, you might carry in the things.

(They go out.)

Henri: Are things very bad, Monsieur?

Albert: Pretty bad, but we've made out. I guess we can pull through now.

(Yvette returns with dishes. Henri goes to assist.)

Henri: Let me. Is this right?

Yvette: I hope so; Madame is so particular.

(Julie brings dishes.)

Julie: Sit down, everything will be getting cold. Take your old place Georges. Come Albert.

Henri: I have already had supper at the hospital.

Albert: Not like this, I'll bet.

Julie: That makes no difference. You must have some of this bouillon. And here is some roast pork; I bought it from neighbor Bardette especially for you . . . and some delicious coffee.

Albert: There's no use arguing, Georges. (They laugh. Albert sits, and shows Henri where to sit.)

Henri: It looks mighty good; and as I've had only a hospital supper, well . . .

Julie (Placing another dish on the table.): And here are some Madeleines you like so.

Henri: This is great.

Julie: Do you remember how you used to love them when you were a little tot? Many a time I caught you stealing them out of the cupboard.

Albert: He was too young to remember that.

Henri: It isn't fair though. We are to eat and you are to watch.

Yvette: I've had my supper, and you know we mustn't eat two.

(She sits opposite Henri.)

Albert: They'll feast on you . . . with their eyes.

Henri: I'm afraid they'll go away hungry then.

Julie: That's all right, so long as you do not.

(She sits beside Henri, left. Throughout this scene there must be a lively spirit. Yvette does not eat. Julie touches scarcely anything, and Albert eats sparingly. The emphasis should be on providing everything for Henri. The particular foods do not matter so much. The important thing is that this dinner should be a ceremonial rite to these half-starved peasants.)

Henri: Not likely with such good things to eat. This is the best bread I've tasted since I came over . . . (Sensing the warning of Albert.) . . . since I left home. Did you make it, ma petite mere?

Julie: Yes.

Yvette: (Partly out of pique.): Tell us about some of your experiences.

Albert: Give the boy a chance. There'll be plenty of time for that.

Henri: Let's talk about something pleasant. I'd rather forget. On, but I mustn't forget my comrades. Jean and Louis send their thanks and best wishes. They'll be leaving the hospital, too in a few weeks.

Julie: I'm very glad of that. And how is Jerome?

Henri: Jerome?

Julie: Has anything happened to him? And you never said a word?

Albert: You forget Julie, that Jerome's squadron was sent to the southern front soon after they left Orleans.

Julie: Oh, yes. Then you haven't heard from him since?

Henri (Shaking his head.): I hope he has fared as well as I have. I hope someone's been as good to him as you've been to me. I want to thank you ma petite mere, for all the things you have done for me.

Julie: Just eat; everything will be getting cold.

Henri: Very well. If I'm not to talk, then you must tell me what has been happening here.

Yvette: Not much.

Julie: It's been the same old thing . . . sewing and cobbling, cobbling and sewing, when we could . . . when there was anything to sew or cobble . . . when we didn't have to do chores for the supermen.

Henri: (To Yvette.): You seem to have escaped the Nazis.

Julie: Her mother kept her hidden away in the attic. And well she did too. She had a hard time getting rations. Many a time I had to help her.

Albert: Julie, you are eating nothing yourself.

Julie: As much as I want. You heard about the garden . . .

(Henri nods yes.)

And how badly it turned out. Your favorite corner was a marsh for nearly a month. I planted it three times. You remember we had just such a year in . . . when you first went to . . .

Albert: To the Lycee, Julie.

Julie: But now that you're back to help us, we can grow as much as we did before.

Henri: But ma petite mere, . . . you know . . . I won't be . . .

Albert: Never mind; that will be settled in good time. You will help when you are able.

Henri: But . . . don't you see . . .

Julie: What?

Albert: Let the boy eat in peace.

Yvette (Changing the subject.): I see you're wearing my sweater.

Henri: I'm particularly fond of it, because you put my initials in it. The other fellows can't claim it's theirs.

Julie (Looking reproachfully at Yvette.): Have you still got the one I made?

Henri: Yes, indeed. I wear it when I get dressed up. I don't feel though that I ought to keep two sweaters, when so many haven't even one.

Julie: Does it keep you good and warm, even the crippled shoulder?

Henri: Perfectly.

Julie: It is entirely well?

Henri: Once in a while it catches.

Julie (Feeling his shoulder.): Where does it catch? You should rub it with ointment. I'll rub it for you tonight.

Henri: But it's all right. You see I learned how to take care of myself . . . (Playfully.) thanks to the advice of ma petite mere.

Julie: And have you followed my advice in other ways? Have you lived so you would not be ashamed?

Henri: Well . . .

Julie: Have you counted your rosary every day and prayed to the Holy Mother to guide you?

Albert: Julie, you embarrass the boy. That is a matter for the closet.

Julie: I hope you haven't lost it.

Henri: Oh, no, no.

Julie: It's the one heirloom of the family. My mother, when she gave it to me, made me promise to pass it on to my eldest son. I had planned to give it to you on your wedding day, but when the war came and you had to go away . . . Tell me, can you repeat the promise you made . . .

Henri: Ah—h—h

Julie: A promise to . . .

Albert: Julie, how can you expect the boy to remember such matters after what he has been through?

Julie: It can wait. We must give you time to settle down.

Henri: I may not be out of the army for a long time.

Albert: He must go back to the hospital tonight, Julie.

Henri: Tomorrow I go to Rouen, where I'm to be transferred . . .

Julie: Rouen? That is far . . . but then . . . sooner or later . . .

Henri: . . . Then I'm . . .

Julie: Then you will be free, forever free!

Henri (Desperately.): Not quite, but I'll be returning to the land of the . . .

Albert (Rising.): Georges!

(Henri rises.)

Julie: Albert? What?

Albert: Julie, try to make the short time he has left tonight as pleasant as possible.

Julie (Resignedly.): I'll do the best I can.

Henri: You have done a great deal.

Julie: Albert, you didn't let the boy finish his supper.

Henri: I've finished, really. Besides, I must be going.

Julie: Not yet. Have some more meat . . . (She gently pushes him back into his chair.) . . . and some more coffee. There now. While you're eating, I'll get your things ready.

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Henri: They're all right. Please don't.
(He jumps up. She pushes him down again.)
Julie: Come along, Yvette. I might need you.

(She goes into the bedroom. Yvette loiters behind. Henri drinks his coffee.)

Albert: Quick, tell me, what are your plans?

Henri: Only what I said. At Rouen I am to be transferred to the 96th Regiment of the Third Army.

Albert: And then?

Henri: Then I suppose I wait until they send me home.

Albert: You wish to leave France?

Henri: No, I don't wish to leave France, but I want to go home.

(Yvette suppresses a sob and exits into bedroom.)

Who wouldn't? You would yourself, Monsieur, if you had a mother and . . . and . . . waiting for you. Of course I love France. Why shouldn't I, when I owe my life to the men who rescued me, and the women who protected me? I love her too because I'm French. But I want to go home to my own.

Albert: Yes, of course you want to go home to your own. But you must not tell Julie. It will break her heart; it will kill her.

Henri: What can I do? Would you have me deceive her?

Albert: I don't know. Spare her as much as you can.

Henri: God knows I don't want to pain her. I've got to be back by taps.

(Julie enters with the pack and an armful of clothes. Yvette carries the coat, etc.)

Julie: You haven't eaten a thing.

Henri: I really couldn't . . . except the coffee.

(Julie begins to open the pack.)

Please don't do that. I don't need those things.

Julie: You might.

Henri: I'll tend to them.

Julie: You're not a good packer; you just stuff things in. What's this . . . wood . . . and iron . . . and . . .

Henri: Look out, you'll break something! Wait! Let me! I've got something for you. (Yvette begins to clear the table.) I wrapped it in one of my shirts to protect it. (Lightly.) I hope the contact hasn't hurt it. (Takes package from shirt and stuffs shirt back in pack.) There. That's for you.

Julie: Thank you, but you shouldn't have done that. (She unwraps the package, which contains a large glass dish.)

Henri: And here's something for you. I stuck it down deep, so the "shave-tails" couldn't find it. They're entirely too nosy.

Julie: It's lovely . . . too lovely.

Henri (Handing Albert a package.): This is from a German. You understand? (Albert nods. Henri turns so Julie will not hear.) It was when I was rescued by the Maquis. He'd beaten me. I couldn't miss the chance. It's been a lucky piece ever since.

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Say you saw it in *Dramatics Magazine*.

Julie: Cut glass. It is so expensive. You should not have done that. We cannot afford it.

Albert: A watch. It isn't often things come back after twenty-five years. I shall cherish it doubly, my boy.

Henri (Discovering Yvette standing aside, he dives into the pack again.): I was going to give you this tomorrow.

Yvette: Thank you.

Julie: You must take it back.

Henri: I bought it for you; you must keep it to remember me by. (Yvette takes bracelet from box and puts it on.)

Julie: But I don't need it; I'll have you.

Henri: But I shan't always be here.

(Julie looked confused.)

Albert: Come, let us drink a toast . . . to ourselves . . . to each other.

(Pours wine and passes glasses.)

Who knows, Julie, it may be a long time before we are together again. The army is slow, and Georges may not get back as soon as we would wish. Come, come, a toast to Georges! To Georges, for all he has done for France, and for us. May he be rewarded as we would like him to be.

Julie: And may he long be spared to us! (They touch glasses.)

Henri: And now to you . . . to those I leave behind . . . long lives and happy ones.

Albert: That's a brave toast, lad. It must be a great happiness to make up for the sorrow we have had.

Julie: No, Albert, no. How can you say that? Has not our boy come back as we have asked? At least he's coming back.

Albert: Julie, we have gone through many trials together. You have always been a brave woman. You have always had the courage to face what God has sent. Promise me not to lose that courage no matter how dark the world may get.

Julie: What do you mean? You frighten me.

Albert (Going to the hearth.): Suppose . . . suppose . . . that things were not . . . what . . .

Julie (*Anxiously following him.*): How strangely you act, Albert. What is the matter?

Albert: I am worried about you.

Julie: Is that all? There is no need. I am strong enough to yet bear disappointments.

Henri (*Pointedly; coming close to her.*): Ma petite mere, do you remember when you first saw me?

Julie: Indeed I do. I hardly knew you in your uniform. You came bounding up the path and threw your arms about my neck, and said, "Aren't you glad that I am going?"

Henri: I mean in the hospital.

Julie: That too. Poor boy, you were suffering so you did not know me then.

Henri: And did you know me then?

Julie (*Playfully slapping his face.*): You tease. (*She starts again to rearrange the pack.*)

Henri: Don't do that, please. (*Putting his arm around her.*) You know . . . try to remember . . . Don't you understand? . . . I'm . . . I'm not coming back . . . I'm going home.

Julie: Home. (*She stares at him, walks to the table, sits, stares straight before her.*)

Henri: Yes, ma petite mere, don't you understand? To the folks at home . . . in Ohio . . . to mother and father, . . . and sister . . . and the best girl I know. Don't you see? Don't you understand?

(*They silently watch Julie.*)

Of course I love France. I'm French. I owe my life to the Maquis, and the women like you who brought me back to health. I shall never be able to repay them. But I've been away a long time, and my people are as anxious to see me as I am to see them.

(*Julie does not respond.*)

Please say you understand. I'm very sorry to hurt you. I would give much, very much to stay here with you, or to take you along. But that is impossible.

(*Julie remains transfixed.*)

Albert: Yes, that is impossible. Never mind Julie, we still have each other; we can be happy yet. We can end as we began.

Julie (*Enjoying silence.*): I wish to think . . . to remember. (*Unconsciously her hand clasps the locket. She slowly looks at the picture, then at Henri.*) Georges! Georges! (*Her manner changes suddenly. She covers her face with her hands.*) My boy!

Henri: Forgive me. I couldn't help it. I don't want to be ungrateful.

Julie (*Slowly, with a smile of despair.*): Yes . . . I understand now . . . I understand . . . it all.

Henri: I'm so glad.

Julie: I was unkind and . . . ungrateful . . .

Henri: Oh, no, no . . .

(*Albert catches Henri's arm.*)

Julie: . . . Because I'd forgotten my boy, because I'd put you in his place. I have been blind, but I see again. . . . Do not look so frightened, Albert. I know what I am saying. I have been cruel to my boy. But I shall make it up to him. I left him alone when he needed me, but he shall not be lonely very long.

Henri: Do not say that ma petite mere. Think how much richer you are now. You have two sons instead of one.

Julie: I'm much richer now. I know my boy again.

Henri: And I know you now. You make me see how little I knew, how little I understood.

(*Tattoo sounded. Henri hastily puts on his coat and takes up his pack. He seizes Albert's hand. Then he embraces Julie.*)

You'll always be my wonderful little mother . . . in France.

(*He hurries to Yvette.*)

Goodbye, Yvette. (*He kisses her and hurries out. Albert hobbles to the hearth. Yvette moves toward the table to conceal her feelings. Julie walks unsteadily to the picture of the Virgin. Albert and Yvette turn to watch her.*)

Julie (*Kneeling.*): Blessed Mother, can you forgive me for neglecting my boy?

(*She continues to pray, as the Curtain closes.*)

ON THE HIGH SCHOOL STAGE

News items published in this department are contributed by schools affiliated with

The National Thespian Society

Charleston, W. Va.

THE following schools participated in the District 3 festival of the West Virginia High School Drama Festival held at the Charleston High School on March 23, with Lawrence W. Smith and Don Ireland, both troupe sponsors in the Charleston schools, as directors: Clendenin (*Echo*, directed by Ralph B. Currey), Montgomery (*Married at Sunrise*, directed by Marie S. Wilkinson), Spencer (*The Forgotten Man*, directed by Emma Neal Boggess), Williamstown (*The Nine Lives of Emily*, directed by Helen Riggle), Ceredo-Kennova (*Antic Spring*, directed by Nan Hutchison), and Colcord (*Riders to the Sea*, directed by Melrose Higginbotham). The plays, *Echo* and *Antic Spring*, were chosen by Sidney Spade, director of the Kanawha Players who served as critic judge, to enter the state festival at West Virginia University held May 10, 11.

Greenfield, Ohio

RECENT dramatic events at the Edward Lee McClain High School (Troupe 400) included the McClain Minstrel show presented on March 22, and a production of *Brother Goose* given on April 12 by the second year speech students. Net proceeds from these productions will be used to purchase stage lighting equipment. Advance pupils, all Thespians, presented *Jane Eyre* on May 3. Members of the Washington, C. H., Ohio, Troupe attended the dress rehearsal.—*Joanne Watts, President.*

Grants Pass, Ore.

ALMOST EIGHTEEN, a three-act comedy, was given in November by the Junior Class of the Grants Pass High School (Troupe 651) as the first major play of this season at that school. On January 17 the drama class followed with an evening of four one-act plays: *Nobody Sleeps*, *Senior Freedom*, *Jacob Comes Home*, and *The Tantrum*. Two other one-acts, *Let's Make Up* and *Home by Midnight*, were also presented by the drama class at later dates. The third major production, *Night of January 16*, was presented in April under sponsorship of the Senior Class. The operetta, *Pinafore*, was given in March with the Glee Club spon-

soring the production. Among recent projects of the drama class is the presentation of half-hour radio programs. Miss Fern C. Trull directs dramatics and sponsors the Thespian Troupe at this school.

Berea, Ohio

RECENT dramatic productions at the Berea High School (Thespian Troupe 612) are *The Doctor Has A Daughter*, a three-act comedy staged by the Junior Class, and a playbill of three one-act plays, *Antic Spring*, *So Wonderful (In White)*, and *How to Be Happy Though Married*, staged on February 7. *Antic Spring* was later presented as part of an exchange assembly program with the high schools of Oberlin and Wellington. *The Whole Town's Talking* was offered by the Senior Class as the last major play of the season. Miss Ethel J. Keeney directs dramatics and Thespian activities.—*Arlene Gutzman, Secretary.*

Amarillo, Texas

THE 1945-46 season saw the performance of the following one-act plays at the Amarillo Senior High School (Troupe 335): *A Crown for Mary*, *The Man in the Bowler Hat*, *His First Date*, *The Castle of Mr. Simpson*, *At the Stroke of Twelve*, *There's A Crowd*, *Sky Fodder*, *Will-o-the-Wisp*, *Undertow*, and *Which Is the Way to Boston*. These plays were all given for student assemblies under the direction of Mrs. N. N. Whitworth. Dramatics students also assisted the U. S. O. Club in a series of radio skits, presented advertisements regarding school activities, and staged a program in observance of National Education Week. A three-act play, *Mystery Manor*, was given on April 10, 11.—*Karlene Horton, Secretary.*

Tulare, Calif.

THE first major play of the 1945-46 season (*Ah Men!*) at the Tulare Union High School (Troupe 642) was given on November 2, with Troupe sponsor Betty R. Severin directing. The second full-length production, *Children of the Moon*, was presented on May 3, with Miss Severin also directing. Among the one-acts staged for school purposes were *Singapore Spider* and *Bargains in Cathay*. Other



The Doctor in Spite of Himself staged by the Laboratory Theatre of the Ottawa Hills High School, Grand Rapids, Iowa. Directed by Mary Baloyan.

Our Hearts Were Young and Gay

Three Act Comedy; 7m, 10w;
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fog horn begins to sound, and both girls are ready to leap into life preservers. Emily is frantically trying to recall the swimming strokes she was taught in school. However, the ship is merely nearing port. Cornelia is feeling sick. The medical students immediately diagnose the trouble—measles. At her age! Cornelia is petrified. Emily is convinced that they will be quarantined on the ship. The only thing to do is somehow pass Cornelia by the medical inspector. Cornelia must exercise all the make-up skill she has. The act she puts on in front of the bewildered medical inspector is uproarious. Yes, the girls get by the inspection and are off to Paris. Here, they get involved with a gas meter that explodes, sleep in a bed that Cardinal Richelieu once used, and try to convince a great French actor that he should give them acting lessons. After viewing several roles, he advises them to take in sewing. But he was wrong and they prove it as their joyous and zestful vacation whirls to a lovely and charming conclusion.

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Harry Comes To, was presented on April 5 with the Junior Class as sponsoring group. Among the one-acts given during the season were *Comes Romance*, *Orville's Big Date*, and *The Idlings of the King*. During the spring one-acts were exchanged with the dramatics groups of the Monticello and Ellenville High Schools. Miss Ethel R. Rice directs dramatics at this school.—*Mae Esposito, Secretary*.

Spokane, Wash.

MEMBERS of Troupe 628 of the North Central High School enjoyed an extremely busy season under the direction of Miss Grace Gorton. The first major production of the year was *Feathers in a Gale*, with Thespians as sponsors. Immediately following this show came the annual operetta, *In Old Vienna*, in which Thespians took several parts, and provided the make-up for the entire large cast and chorus. Thespians were also responsible for the make-up for the eighth biennial *Doll Shop*, a variety show in which over two hundred students participated. During breathing spells between these major shows, Thespians presented a number of skits and one-acts including *Evening Dress Indispensable*, *The Mouse Trap*, *Suppressed Desires*, and *The Lamp Went Out*. The last major production of the season, *George and Margaret*, was given with a double cast in May. The Troupe officers are: Jack Gray, president; Marilyn Meisner, vice-president; Mona Noack, secretary; Marilyn Perry, treasurer, and Paul Burgess, historian-reporter.

Honor Roll

A complete "Best Thespian" Honor Roll for 1945-46 season will appear in our November issue. The roll will be based upon names reported as of September 15.

Revere, Mass.

A VARIETY of dramatic projects sponsored during the past season by members of Troupe 156 and other dramatic students of the Revere High School were well supported by townspeople. The year's program opened in September with a theatre party to a performance of *The Tempest*. The first major production, *Incognito*, was given two performances on December 5, 6. December also included a Verse Choir production and theatre parties to *Oklahoma* and *Pygmalion*. Over one hundred friends and relatives were present for the first annual guest night presentation of two one-act plays on January 16. On April 7 a theatre party saw a performance of *Claudia* at Tufts College with charter president Eugene Lyons in the male lead. A rating of superior was given to the Troupe's presentation of *Mr. F* in the annual Massachusetts Drama Festival held on April 12 at Swampscott. The play was chosen for entry in the New England Drama Festival held at Rochester, New Hampshire, late in April 26-27, where it was given top honors and a rating of Excellent. The final major production of the season, and the fifth annual Thespian production, an evening of three one-act plays, was presented on May 24. The playbill consisted of *Statue of Liberty*, *Behind the Throne*, and several verse choir selections. Dramatics directors at this school are June Hamblin and Emily L. Mitchell.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

DRAMATICS students of the Wilson High School (Troupe 418) opened the 1945-46 season with a successful production of *Ramshackle Inn* on November 15, with sponsor Cecile Rukgaber directing. This was followed by a production of the one-act, *The Mayor's Hose*, presented in a contest held at Coe College of Cedar Rapids. This in turn was followed by the presentation of an evening of three one-acts, *Pickles Is Pickles*, *The Powers That Be*, *Weinies on Wednesday*, and *The Valiant*. *The Powers That Be* was later given in the All-City Play Festival at the McKinley High School of Cedar Rapids. The performance of the comedy, *Spring Green*, on May 10 brought to a close a successful season which qualified students for Thespian membership.—*Martha Lagos, Secretary*.

Bramwell, W. Va.

TWO major plays, *The Howling Doc* (November 16), and *Jumpin' Jupiter* (March 29) were given at the Bramwell High School (Troupe 137) this past season, with Miss Jeanne Foster directing. The spring semester also included the presentation of four one-act plays, *The Pampered Darling*, *His First Shave*, and *The Happy Journey*, with the last-mentioned play entered in the West Virginia High School Drama Festival held at Concord State College on March 30. Sixteen Thespian members of the Senior class participated in the annual citizenship pageant presented on May 3. A number of dramatic students attended the performance of *The Male Animal* given by the Players of Concord State College on April 29.—*Dottie Lambert, Secretary*.

Glendo, Wyo.

THESPIANS of Troupe 211 of the Glendo High School took an active part in each of the three major plays during the past season by the school, with Mr. Ernie A. Moeller directing. The first three-act play, *Submarine Island*, was given by the Junior class in November. In March Thespians gave *Through the Keyhole*. The third play, *June Mad*, was given by the Senior Class in April. Another interesting project of the year was an evening of Thespian-presented one-acts in December, with the playbill consisting of *Winter Sunset*, *Have You Had Your Operation?* and *Smokey Rides Again*. A revue, *Womanless Wedding*, given in February was a joint production of the Athletic Department and Thespians.—*Jerry Burback, Secretary*.

events included programs for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas. Activities at dramatic club meetings included the presentation of scenes from *The Corn Is Green*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Flight to the West*.—*Nancy Cobb, Secretary*.

Sinsinawa, Wis.

HERE SHE COMES, a three-act play presented by the Junior Class, marked the formal opening of the 1945-46 dramatics season at the Saint Clara Academy (Troupe 11), with Sister Thomas More directing. On December 1 the Dramatic Guild and Choral Society presented a musical production entitled *Feast of the Red Corn*. On February 16 Thespians and Junior Class students offered a series of original skits concerning lovers of different lands, in native costumes, and in native modes of transportation such as rickshaw, skis, etc. A student-written play, *Songs of the Soil*, based upon the life and works of Stephen Foster was given on April 6, with the Senior Class sponsoring the production. A climax to the season's program was reached on May 4 with the entry of the one-act, *Weinies on Wednesday*, in the play festival at Lorcas College, Dubuque, Iowa.—*Barbara McGoorty, Secretary*.

Liberty, N. Y.

ONCE THERE WAS A PRINCESS was given on November 16 by the Senior Class of the Liberty High School (Troupe 109) as the first full-length play of the current season. The other three-act play of the year, *Uncle*

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This Martha Scott vehicle is concerned with young Mrs. Rogers, who finds herself the author of a best-seller—and with many problems. 2 m., 3 f. \$2.00. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

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Scene from the play, *Ghost Wanted*, given by Thespian Troupe 45 of the Kilgore, Texas, High School, with Janis Stephens directing.

South Whitley, Ind.

SING FOR YOUR SUPPER, given by the Junior class on March 19, was the major production of the second semester at the South Whitley High School (Troupe 61), with Miss Martha S. Hawkins as sponsor. The other full-length play, *A Little Honey*, was given by the Senior class on November 15. Thespians presented two one-acts, *The Tantrum* and *By Special Request*, on February 12. Another one-act, *Thursdays at Home*, was given as an exchange play with two other nearby schools. Students also took part in humorous and dramatic readings in the county speech contests.—Rosalee Bauman, Secretary.

Gettysburg, Pa.

TWO performances of *Heart Trouble* by the Mask and Wig Club of the Gettysburg High School (Troupe 95) on November 15, 16, opened another year of dramatic projects in which a number of students participated, with Miss Ruth K. Scott as director and troupe sponsor. The second three-act play, *The Ghost Flies South*, was given two performances on March 21, 22, with the Senior class and dramatics club as sponsors. One-acts given during the past season were *Buried Treasure*, *The Missing Link*, and *No Room in the Hotel*. Club meetings were devoted to reviewing of plays, make-up, and a study of the Greek theatre. Members of the dramatics club gave performances of several off-campus plays.—Ruth Fortenbaugh, Secretary.

Bellefontaine, Ohio

SEVERAL dramatic productions at the Bellefontaine High School (Troupe 100) this past year combined to give the school one of the most successful seasons of recent years. The first three-act play, *Murder at Random*, was given under sponsorship of the Junior class on January 19. On May 31 the Senior class followed with a performance of *Double or Nothing*. Other activities of the spring term included the one-acts, *Deep in the Heart of Texas*, *Gerry Breaks a Date*, *Merry Molly Malone*, *The Tree of His Father*, and the school "Follies" presented on February 20. Dramatic club meetings were devoted to a study of make-up and acting. Miss Doris Blair had charge of the dramatics program.—Jane Stahler, Secretary.

Meridian, Miss.

THESPIANS of Troupe 134 of the Meridian Junior-Senior High School were sponsors for two major productions this past spring. On February 16 they presented *Here Comes Charlie*. On April 19 they followed with a performance

of *Aunt Susie Shoots the Works*. Thespians were also responsible for the production of three one-act plays, *It Is Fun to Drive*, *Inn of Despair*, and *The Lamp Went Out*. Meetings of the dramatics club were devoted to a study of make-up and stage techniques. Added interest in the dramatics program was created by the assistance given the Meridian Little Theatre by members of Troupe 134. Miss Josephine Garrott was in charge of the year's dramatics activities.—Rachel Currie, Secretary.

Miamisburg, Ohio

TWO major plays were given during the past year at the Miamisburg High School (Troupe 241) under the direction of troupe sponsor M. H. Wieser. Thespians were sponsors for the first play, *Once and For All*, given on February 14. The other play, *Professor, How Could You?* was given to large audiences on May 11, 12, with the Senior class sponsoring the production. The year's activities in dramatics qualified a number of students for Thespian membership.—Ellen Good, Secretary.

Corona, Calif.

A TRIP to Padua Hills to witness the production of a Christmas play by the Mexican Players, another trip to Whittier College for the production of *Papa Is All*, and a drive to Hemet, California, for the performance of the pageant, *Ramona*, were among the highlights of an extremely busy season in dramatics this past year at the Corona Senior High School (Troupe 316), with Miss Thelma V. Speague directing. The fall term included an Armistice Day production, a Christmas play, a talent revue, and an evening of three one-act plays, *The Happy Journey*, *Sugar and Spice*, and *Last Night*. The one major play of the year, *And Came the Spring*, was given on March 1, with the Junior class as sponsors. A climax to the season's program was reached with the formal installation of Troupe 316 under Miss Speague's supervision.

Willoughby, Ohio

THE spring term at the Willoughby High School (Troupe 220) was marked by a variety of dramatic projects, all under the supervision of troupe sponsor Florine Fels Carroll. Five one-act plays, *Romance Is a Racket*, *Lawyer Lincoln*, *Cinderella*, *Wisdom Teeth* and *Gloria Mundi*, were presented by the Playshop. In March the Senior class gave with considerable popular success two performances of *Snafu*. In May the Glee Club and the Playshop combined their efforts to produce the operetta, *In An Old Kentucky Garden*. Meetings of the dramatics club were given to a study of history of the theatre, make-up, and directing.—Mary Lou Shave, Secretary.

JANUARY

THAW

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A scene from Michael Todd's Broadway production

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DRAMATICS students of the Fort Hill High School (Troupe 230) enjoyed an extremely successful and busy season during 1945-46 under the experienced hand of troupe sponsor Geraldine Pritchard. The first three-act play, *The Fighting Littles*, was given to a large audience on November 30, with the Fort Hill Players sponsoring the production. The Players were also sponsors for a one-act play tournament in January with the program consisting of *Rehearsal*, *Star Struck*, *Now That April's Here*, *The Dear Departed*. National Drama Week early in February was observed with a production of a scene from *Antigone*. The second three-act play, *Stage Door*, was given under sponsorship of the Senior class on March 29. The final production of the year, *Cindy*, was an original May Day play given on May 2. Members of Troupe 230 installed Troupe 695 of the Allegany High School, with the ceremony being held in the Fort Hill auditorium. The season also included the production of several scripts over the P. A. System.—Betty Lou Knight.

El Centro, Calif.

THESPIANS of Troupe 325 of the Central Union High School played several prominent roles in the production of the two full-length plays given during the past season. The Senior class sponsored the performance of *Double Exposure* on January 4. The two performances of *The Eyes of Tlaloc* were given under sponsorship of the Junior class on May 10-11. Under the capable supervision of troupe sponsor Laura De Celles a number of students qualified for Thespian membership, giving the troupe its largest group of members in several years.—Peggy McGuire, Secretary.

Jackson, Miss.

THE installation of Troupe 367 at the Central High School, with Miss Emmy Lou

Patton as sponsor, highlighted a successful dramatics season during 1945-46. The spring term opened with a production of *Spring Green* on February 1, with the Theatre Guild as sponsors. On April 15-19, and 22 came the production of the following one-act plays, presented by various school groups: *Moonshine*, *The Valiant*, *The Idlings of the King*, *The Florist's Shop*, *The Monkey's Paw*, *A Message From Knufu*, and *Rich Man, Poor Man*. The combined talents of the Music Department and Theatre Guild produced two performances of the operetta, *H. M. S. Pinafore*, on April 25, 26. Subjects considered at club meetings included make-up, casting, scenic design, lighting, costumes, play reading, stage effects, and directing.—Betsy Berry Jones, Secretary.

Edmonds, Wash.

THE past year saw a variety of dramatic projects at the Edmonds High School (Troupe 424), with Mrs. Grace Bliss as director and troupe sponsor. Two full-length plays, *The Fighting Littles* and *It's All in Your*

Head, were given as class plays. Thespians prepared an original one-act play for an assembly program which was voted the best of the season. Thespians also sponsored the showing of a film, *Shakespeare, the Boy*, as a school project. National Drama Week was celebrated with a dinner and theatre party at the University of Washington. Many students also saw professional performances of *Othello*, *Harriet*, and *Harvey*. Twenty-two students were granted Thespian membership during the year.—Janet Siegrist, Secretary.

McLeansboro, Ill.

THREE major plays and seven one-acts were given during the past season at the McLeansboro Township High School (Troupe 427), with Miss Beulah Rogers as director. The first of the season's three-act plays, *The Green Light*, was given by the Junior class on December 7. On April 4, 5, the Senior class presented *The Darling Brats*. The third full-length play, *Ever Since Eve*, was sponsored by the Dramatics Club and presented on May 10. The season's playbill of one-acts, all presented for school purposes by the Dramatics Club, included *Susie's Debut*, *No Back Seat for Grandma*, *Daddy's Pinck Christmas*, *Proposal by Proxy*, *It's Christmas Again*, *Buddy Answers An Ad*, and *A Young Man's Fancy*.—Wilburn Davis, Secretary.

Garfield Heights, Ohio

MEMBERS of Troupe 448 and the Spolite Club were sponsors of a production of *You Can't Take It With You* presented at the Garfield Heights High School on May 24, with Mrs. Florence Fletcher as director. The past season also included the production of four one-act plays, *Mrs. Harper's Bazaar*, *The Wonder Hat*, *Jazz and Minuet*, and *Tes Means No*, the operetta, *Showboat*, and several playhouse theatre parties. Dramatic club meetings were devoted to a study of scenic design, dance, and

Winning Review

Longmans, Green & Company, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City, publishers of the 4-Star Hollywood Plays dramatized from notable screen hits, announce that the winner of the award to determine the most commendable performances of any of these plays is The Mesa Little Theatre Group of Mesa, Arizona, which produced *My Man Godfrey*, a three-act comedy based on the pictured novel by Eric Hatch. Miss Joyce Hicks, director of the production, wrote the winning review of the problems and achievements of the group's presentation while Mr. Robert L. Ramsey, advisor-technical director, accompanied the winning photograph of the stage setting with a description of the lighting and scenic accomplishments.



A production of the comedy, *Love Your Neighbor*, at the Chowchilla, Calif., High School (Thespian Troupe 434), with Frank Delamarter as director.

stagecraft. Research was done in the use of movies for giving instruction in various theatre subjects.—*Shirley Nathan, Secretary.*

Fayetteville, W. Va.

THE application of make-up in producing various effects on actors, and the effect of stage lighting on make-up, were among the subjects considered this past year at meetings of dramatics students at the Fayetteville High School (Troupe 487), with Miss Wanda Huffman as director and troupe sponsor. The season's schedule of productions opened on November 15 with the Thespian production of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. On April 11 the Junior class gave two one-acts, *Elmer* and *A Mad Breakfast*. On April 25 the Senior class followed with a production of the three-act

play, *Three Moss Roses*. The spring term also included a production of the musical show, *Words and Music*, under the auspices of the Music Department.—*Marjorie Wood, Secretary.*

Bucksport, Me.

THE entry, *The Bond Between*, given by members of Troupe 521 of the Bucksport High School in the state contest won first honors in both the district and semi-final tournaments. Thespians were also responsible for the production of the three-act play, *Gangway for Ghosts*, given on December 20. The past season at this school also included a minstrel show on October 19 and the operetta, *My Old Kentucky Home*, on January 5. The school acted as host for the state one-act play contest. A number of students attended performances by the University of Maine Masque Theatre. The dramatics program was under the direction of Esther Drummond.—*Patricia Simmons, Secretary.*

Providence, R. I.

UNDER the capable direction of Troupe sponsor Emilie S. Piché, Thespian Troupe 528 of the Classical High School presented two major plays this past year. The first of these, *Love Your Neighbor*, was given on December 7. On March 22 Thespians offered *Ah! Men* to a large and appreciative audience. The third major play of the year, *The Missing Witness*, was given by the Senior class on May 10. The one-act, *Post Mortems*, was entered in the play festival held on April 6 at Brown University.—*Emily Horsman, Secretary.*

San José, Calif.

TWO performances of the three-act comedy, *Seven Sisters*, on April 4, 5, brought to a close the 1945-46 dramatic season at the San José Senior High School, with Miss Mary Alice Hamm as director. The season also included the one-act, *Kelly Kid*, a radio broadcast over Station KQW, a Senior class talent day program, and exchange programs with several nearby high schools.

Janesville, Wis.

THREE major dramatic productions were given during the spring term at the Janesville High School (Troupe 538), with Miss Bessie Carter as director. The drama club production of *The Charm School* opened the term on February 21. In April the Senior class offered *Lost Horizon* to a large audience. On May 16 the Music Department presented the operetta, *Martha*. The spring term also included the presentation of a one-act play, *Mildred is My Name*, and the radio presentation of *Foreigners Settled America* over Station WCLO.—*Virginia Falcome, Secretary.*

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January Thaw, a comedy in three acts, by William Roos, adapted from the novel by Belamy Partridge. 6 m., 6 w. One interior set. Royalty quoted upon application. Broadway production at the Golden Theatre, February 5, 1946. This is one of those thoroughly delightful comedies drama groups enjoy producing. *January Thaw* has, furthermore, all the elements of the dramatic designed to please an audience. The characters are well-drawn, human, plausible to the end. The lines are rich in that type of humor which is based upon genuine knowledge of the mental processes of people the stage delights in dramatizing. Briefly stated, the story is that of the Gage family which has bought and moved into an old house in Connecticut, only to discover, after they restore the house to its Colonial state, that its former occupants of some six years previous, have returned and occupy part of the house under certain reservations made at the time they disposed of their property. How these two families, entirely different in background, tastes, and politics, work against each other until they discover how to work together, forms the basic plot. *January Thaw* is an especially fine play for high school and college groups, providing many excellent opportunities for character work. Here is a play that we predict will be one of the hits of 1946-47.—*Ernest Bavely*.

Strictly Formal, a comedy in three acts, by William Davidson. 6 m., 10 w. One simple set: a living room in a typical Mid-western home. Jane hasn't a date for the junior-senior dance. Marcia, a glamour girl from New York City, further complicates matters by captivating every available male. The play is brought to the usual happy conclusion by Cindy Collins, a country cousin who has seen too many motion pictures. A clean-cut, wholesome comedy, ideally suited to high school or junior college groups.—*Reverend R. S. Pushnick*.

The Black Ghost, a three-act mystery, by Rilla Carlisle. 4 boys, 6 girls. Non-royalty to amateurs on purchase of ten copies. If junior high actors wish to produce a thriller, this is written at their level. Mrs. Heywood and her daughters inherit a haunted house; the place is being used by a boys' group for initiation. Two strange girls arrive and ask to spend the night. The black ghost appears and disappears through many exciting scenes.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

Walter H. Baker Co., 178 Tremont Street,
Boston 11, Mass.

Transparent Curtain Pageants for Christmas, by Martha Mixer. Royalty free to amateurs provided enough copies are purchased for production. The three pageants in this collection are arranged to make use of the transparent curtain in presenting the beautiful and familiar yuletide scenes such as the Babe in the manger and the shepherds watching their flocks. *The Christmas Angels*, *Christmas Comes to Old Grouch*, and *Unto the Least of These* all require over a dozen characters with extras for the caroling and tableaux. Each production shows the true Christmas spirit as contrasted with the selfishness and greed of different people. Excellent for church groups or high school thespians.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

For Freedom's Sake, a pageant in 3 actions by Percy Jewett Burrell. Royalty free with purchase of at least six copies—provided no admission is charged. Five major speaking parts,

but the number of participants may range from fifty to several hundred. May be staged simply or elaborately either in-doors or out-of-doors.

This is a very colorful allegorical pageant. Victory salutes the service men and women of our country and then with the help of civilization and Justice banishes the criminals of the world—Greed, Hate, and Treachery. She reminds us, however, that peace and freedom can prevail only so long as justice and righteousness are foremost in the minds of men. The pageant can be adapted to suit the needs of any community and will provide excellent fare for advanced groups.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 6 East 39th Street,
New York 16, N. Y.

Winterset, a play in three acts, by Maxwell Anderson. 15 m., 4 w., extras. Ext. Int. Royalty on application. As one of the best plays by the foremost American writer of poetic drama, this requires no introduction to people interested in the dramatic arts. It is a grim and moving story of what might have taken place supposing Bartolomeo Vanzetti (called Romagna in the play) had had a son who dedicated himself to clearing his father's name. A summary of the plot would make it sound like a gangster melodrama, but anyone who has read the script or seen Burgess Meredith and Margo bring it to life on stage or screen will know that it is much more than that. An odd mingling of tenderness and toughness, it is a moving portrayal of the worst and the best in humanity, of cruelty that deals in death and of love that cannot be consummated in life but that looks beyond. The language of the script makes the play unsuitable for immature actors, and could not be revised without spoiling the play; the acting difficulties are considerable; and the technical problems require a well-equipped stage. For these reasons the play cannot be recommended for high school production. However, it offers a worthy challenge to colleges and community groups.—*Blandford Jennings*.

Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Out of This World, a farce-comedy in three acts, by Bruce Brandon. 4 m., 6 w. No royalty. The entire action of this laugh-provoking farce-comedy takes place in the parlor of a boarding house in California. The hero of the play learns to his consternation from his physician that he has only three months more to live. The same day he inherits a fortune. His attempts to give away the money and to ward off his approaching marriage with the girl he loves constitute the main plot of the story. There is much spirited action and many hilarious scenes climaxing in a surprise ending.—*Helen Movius*.

Something for Nothing, a comedy in three acts, by Walter Blake. 4 m., 8 w. Royalty, \$10. Here is a comedy suitable for the high school that is looking for a simple play with plenty of action. An average young couple living happily, except for the wife's mad dashes to every auction sale in the country, are visited by the wife of the young husband's father. The latter is a domineering person who tries to regulate the entire household. Complications begin when the young wife brings home an old black suitcase from an auction sale. Strangers pop in and out; some offer fabulous prices for the suitcase, others hide in the house hoping to steal it. After a hectic day, everything straightens out to the satisfaction of everyone.—*Helen Movius*.

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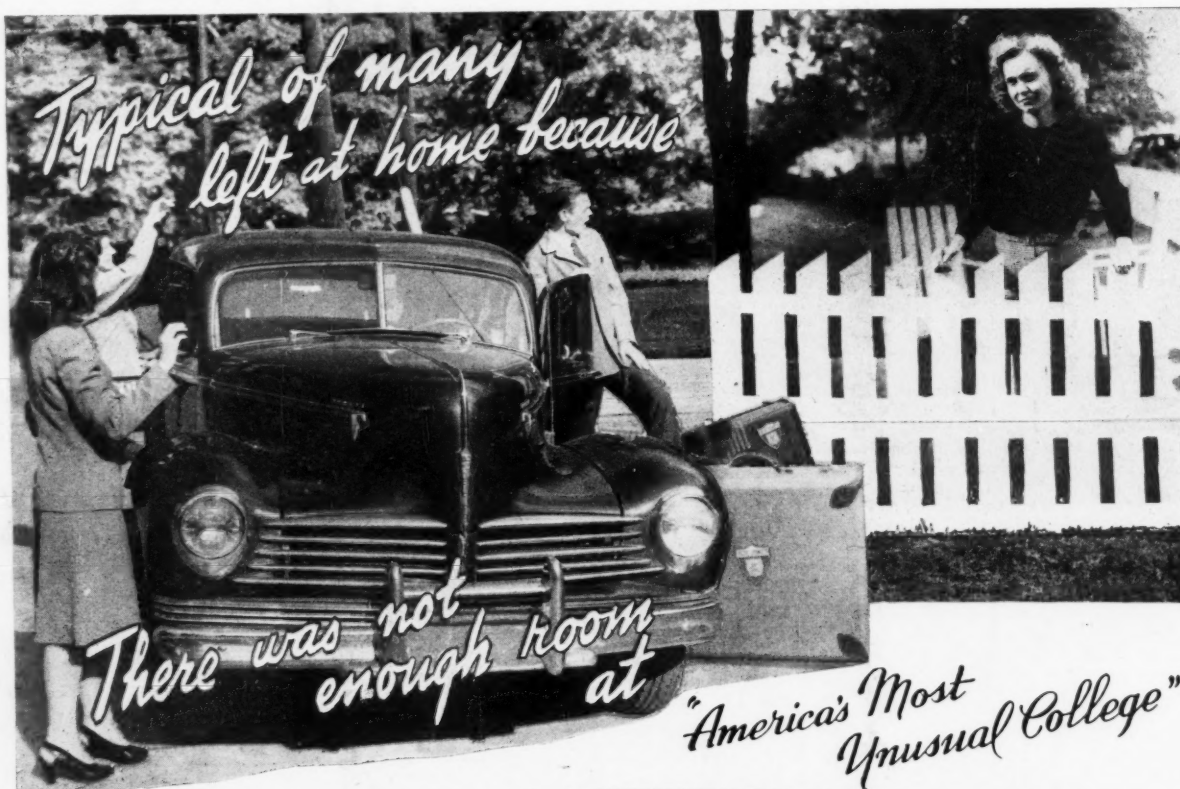
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